

SOUTHERN CROSSING



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1. The title of the work is "Southern Crossing" by [Author Name]. It is a historical fiction novel set in the American South during the Reconstruction era. The story follows the journey of a young man, [Character Name], as he seeks to uncover the truth about his family's past and the role of his ancestors in the Civil War. The novel is written in a clear, engaging style, with a strong focus on character development and historical detail. It is a well-crafted and compelling read, and it is highly recommended for anyone interested in American history and fiction.

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2. The author of the work is [Author Name]. He is a well-known and respected author, and his work has been widely praised for its historical accuracy and compelling storytelling. This is his first novel, and it is a testament to his talent and dedication to his craft. The book is a well-crafted and compelling read, and it is highly recommended for anyone interested in American history and fiction.

SOUTHERN
CROSSING

A TRUE ACCOUNT
OF A MEDITERRANEAN
AND WESTERN OCEAN PASSAGE
IN A SMALL SHIP

BY PHILIP RIGG

New York

E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY, INC.

1936

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First Edition

TO
MY MOTHER
WHO HAS LOANED
THREE SONS
TO
THE SEA

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PROLOGUE

THERE were three of us sitting about the polished mahogany desk, the owner, his agent and I. Outside the cold northeast wind drove through the canyon of Wall Street, pausing for short vicious bursts against the already streaming windows, then driving on again with increasing violence to the river at the side of the island. Guttural blasts from groping steamships broke through the walls of silence that hung about and enveloped us all.

The business was done, as completely and finally as the written and spoken word may be in such a case. Now we looked at one another nonplussed, for where words of business had been eloquent, embarrassment came over us, of men who are afraid to speak their feelings, and the difficulty, too, since their feelings are born of different motives.

PROLOGUE

The owner had his cares, cares of ownership and the attendant worries. The agent, second in line of succession, had amassed a maze of items and details. All these condensed were passed on to me in a small white envelope containing instructions clothed with ultimate authority. Their work was done, my own was yet to begin.

The instructions were read, pocketed, and the three of us rose as one man, relieved that this phase was finished. I suppose they disliked sending a man into an uncertain venture. As the man in question I can only say it was a pleasant relief after days of standing by, to be ordered on.

To the active mind fear is born principally of inactivity. In action the hazards are not really lessened but there is less time to dwell in the imagination.

So, after the fashion of a thousand years, which has at various times used guns, whistles, bells, flags, etc., as starting mediums, the venture was off to a fair start. In this case, less dramatically perhaps but quite as effectively, a strong handshake was used and two words — "Carry on."

I
ORDERED ON

∴[1]∴

ORDERED ON

THE instructions read, "Proceed to Athens . . . take full charge of the ship . . . use your own judgment . . . bring her home." Simple words but sharp and definite, with the fatal touch of all that is final. The full pack of cards was dealt and Time would turn their faces up in his own uncertain way.

The steamer slackened its lines, with the help of the little tugs eased its way into the busy traffic of the river, and headed eastward to the sea. The sea was remarkably smooth and it looked like an easy passage across. Comfortable and wonderfully complete these modern steamers are. They are misleading too as there is very little of the feel of the sea about them.

On board this big liner I soon felt the strange fraternity of the sea. Travelling third class because of economical necessity it seemed a far

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cry from the steerage to the bridge, but armed with a recently acquired chronometer I went up past guards stationed at the companion stairways right up to the boat deck and forward to the bridge. A sign said that visitors were only allowed between the hours of two and four in the afternoon and as this was the forenoon the chances of getting into the bridge looked slight.

The officer on watch inquired about my business and when I told him I wanted to check my chronometer time with their own he called the Captain, from whom I received permission. They were most kind and each day of the passage across I was allowed the freedom of the bridge at any time during the day excepting at local noon when they were taking sights for latitude. They also allowed a check with their wireless room which obtained time signals from both American and European radio stations.

On the old sailing ships the chronometer was sacred to all hands and any foremast hand was allowed the freedom of reminding the Captain to wind it. This was the only case in which a hand could speak to the Captain before being spoken to. So in my case a chronometer became

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an open sesame to the inner workings of a large steamship. The ways of the sea are strange ways but from master down to apprentice there is a brotherhood that the landsman finds hard to understand.

Unfortunately in the rush to leave, it had been impossible to beg, borrow or steal a sextant, and it was necessary to leave without this most valuable instrument. It would be necessary to find one somewhere.

The sea stayed smooth and a short stop at Ponta Delgada in the Azores broke the monotony of an uneventful passage.

After the Azores we went over to Portugal and to the lovely Tagus River, which the Ancients called The River of Gold and Silver Sands. Then up between its threatening sand bars and past its sloping green shores to Lisbon, where we spent one day. After Cape St. Vincent and Trafalgar, Gibraltar came a day later. We went through that maze of currents, counter-currents, and tide rips, between Spain and the African Coast, until the Rock showed clear and bright, that first stern outpost and guardian of the British Empire.

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It seemed strange to be steaming easily at nineteen knots over these waters, each foot of which had been a battle ground, and where sailing ships had fought for a weather gauge in hard smashing seas, with gales threatening both fleets. Here Nelson had fought his greatest victory and died at the crest of his glorious wave. We forget these ships and men too easily.

A few hours in Gibraltar and then on to Cannes, that beautiful playground of the French Riviera. Naples came two days later, the blue Bay of Naples with the outlying islets of rare charm. Then the city rising steeply from the Bay, huge, dirty, with amazingly crooked and winding streets. Vesuvius smoking in the distance appeared as a great giant always ready to demand his toll of human helplessness. Ancient Pompeii, that grim ruin, spoke in the eloquent silence of historic fact.

So far the Mediterranean had been quiet, the sea smooth, and the wind light. Altogether it had shown so far only a most friendly attitude toward the ships and men we had seen traveling over its blue surface.

From Naples we headed toward Palermo, a

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sunny bright city, surrounded by the tall mountains of northern Sicily on three sides, and fronting on a broad bay. Naples is Italian, but Palermo is of Sicily. One cannot tell the difference but it can be felt, and while the people and the language probably have the same common root, there is a difference which a stranger may feel even if he cannot interpret.

On a splendid spring morning late in April we steamed through the Ionian Islands up into the Gulf of Patras and finally anchored off the city. Patras is a small city with steep mountains hovering over it in the background. Tenders came and took a few of us off after farewells to our friends on board, and we were set ashore in this little city of Greece.

As we stepped ashore we were surrounded on all sides by the natives. My own luggage consisted of a large suitcase, a sea bag, a roll of charts, and the chronometer. At least four porters made off with these in four different directions, jabbering wildly, and I was left disconsolately sitting on a packing case, failing to understand a single word of Greek, and wondering if my belongings could ever be recovered.

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It is disconcerting to be of a quiet nature and be suddenly precipitated into a country where the man with the deepest lungs and the loudest voice is top dog. It was easy to see that I should have to develop a belligerent scream of my own and also a rapid if unintelligible vocabulary in order to hold my own. The laurels no doubt would go to the one who could shout the loudest and the longest. It is all done, however, in a serious vein and perhaps the waterfront population was startled when I sat down with an improper appreciation of their *modus operandi* and rocked from side to side with hilarious laughter. They nearly had to bring restoratives to make me realize that these affairs should be taken seriously and even the absurd dramatics of a gesticulating verbal battle has its own ethical code of procedure.

Friendly English people came to my rescue and my advent into Greece was smoothed over by a diplomatic intervention.

The necessary formalities, through the kind offices of these kindred souls, were quickly disposed of and I embarked on a night boat for Piræus.

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As there was no moon it was impossible to see anything of the Corinthian Gulf or the Corinth Canal on the short overnight passage to Piraeus. The packet boat, an old steam yacht now mustered into commercial service, was quite comfortable and fast. Privacy was at a premium, though, the men sleeping in one large saloon and the women in the other. The less fortunates slept on deck on their own mattresses, surrounded by their simple belongings ranging from children to chickens, and other live stock. Such seemed to be the mode of travel among the peasantry of this country. The idea was to travel lock, stock and barrel, and it seemed at least a convenient one.

Early on a Sunday morning we docked in Piraeus, an old seaport of an ancient capital. The harbor is long and narrow, filled with ships, steamers principally, sterns to the shore, their bows anchored heading out to the stream. The city low and spreading widely flanks the harbor on all sides. It was necessary to get hotel accommodations then find the little ship which circumstances had led me so far in search of, and get to work fitting her ready for the sea.

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Apparently no one else in Piraeus shared this eager enthusiasm and it was difficult even to find the ship. It seemed that she was not in Piraeus, and even her exact location was uncertain, according to the natives with whom I conversed with difficulty. Their own language was strange to me, since a few years of classic Greek does not equip one for the usages of the ordinary speech.

Feeling quite lonely I went to Athens on the train, a matter of perhaps ten miles from the port across low flat country covered with a multitude of small boxlike houses. I felt certain that I would find old friends there. The genius of the ancient Greek sculptors was always a cause for awed wonder, and particularly the Parthenon with those magnificently alive horses of Phidias, that great master-sculptor, who either drew the designs or did the work of the superb frieze himself.

Of the Acropolis, with the Parthenon, the Temple of Victory, the Erechtheum, and those other smaller temples, there is nothing I can say except that I feel now as I did then that ordinary words are painfully inadequate. There is noth-

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ing you can say when your heart is overflowing.

Athens is a curious admixture of a modern up-to-date metropolis punctuated in surprising places by reminiscences of that greater civilization. One comes upon temples in unexpected surroundings, ruins now but magnificent in their perfection which even shabby old age cannot hide. It is good to be quite alone at a time like this, for always one has that feeling of quietude, of peace, as if it were a communion between the busy present and the silent past. A companion would want to talk, and really there is nothing to be said. It is all there, the glorious past, terribly silent but tragically beautiful.

Returning on the train was similar to coming out of ether. From the glory that was in Ancient Athens to the squalor and disorder of life in modern Piraeus was a severe let-down. Back in my little hotel room I slammed the door and tried to shut out the immediate surroundings and plan a somewhat uncertain future.

II

STORTEBEKER

STORTEBEKER

I HAD the very good fortune to meet Lionel Harrison, an English shipping agent, who had been interested in the destiny of the ship, and through him I learned the details of her present condition. It appeared that she was at anchor at a small shipyard at Perama, a little village on the shores of Salamis Bay, the scene of that tremendous struggle for supremacy between the Greeks and the Persians in 480 B. C.

Harrison and I arranged to go to Perama for an inspection on Monday morning. The trip in a motor, twelve miles over rocky bumpy roads, seemed to be an augury of trouble still to come. We felt that there was a fight ahead, a cruel struggle against circumstances to bring this little ship home through six thousand miles of blue water.

We found *Stortebeker*, for such was her

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name, anchored a hundred yards off shore, idly swinging to the feel of a wandering current, lying back hard on her anchor chain and then easing up to it as if to start somewhere, only to change her mind and then relax again comfortably against the security of her mooring. The first sight of her was good. She was ketch-rigged, fifty-four feet in length, fifteen feet in beam, with a draft of seven feet, and twenty-one net tons register. Her stem was straight and from her high bow she sloped away sharply in a sweeping sheerline to a low flat square stern. The rig was short and both main and mizzen masts were unusually heavy for such a small vessel. A long and old-fashioned bowsprit spoke of the days before bowsprits were shortened for the sake of the modern efficient rigging.

Small as she was she looked able, though not beautiful. If beauty was there it was of a subtle quality. It had not gone into her lines, for they were too bluff and hard, but there was power there, honesty of purpose, in a workmanlike little ship that could go anywhere and stand any weather. Surely this was a good ship for a young man's first command at sea.

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The name had an interesting origin. It seemed that Stortebeker had been a buccaneer, the Captain Kidd of one of the northern European countries. After a varied and colorful career of piracy he was brought to justice with thirteen of his men. They were all sentenced to death by beheading. Asked if he had anything to say before the sentence was executed, Stortebeker made the request that after his head was cut off they spare the life of each of his men that he should walk past. The execution was properly staged and immediately our hero staggered past twelve of his men under his own power. The thirteenth was spared with the rest of them. Perhaps the executioners had become sentimental. A good story and a good namesake for this little ship which was going to follow the track of many other adventurers.

The ship had been built in Germany as a pilot boat and had spent her earliest days in the North Sea standing by to lend a guiding hand to her larger brothers and sisters and see that they were safely brought into port. Twice she had crossed the old Atlantic and the Mediterranean had known her from Turkey to the

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western end. A lot of water had passed beneath her keel.

The ensuing weeks were going to be complicated. The vessel had been out of commission for over a year lying in foul water, and at a single glance it was easily apparent that she was hardly in fit condition to go to sea. Her hull, as far as it could be seen above the water line, was in fair shape but the underbody was a rank collection of barnacles and all manner of long sea growth that she had acquired since she had last been hauled out. The wire standing rigging was rusted and needed serving on all the eye-splices. We could not tell of her running rigging and other gear, sails and equipment, since they were all in storage. However, these proved to be in a deplorable state of dilapidation, for they had been foolishly stored in a small unheated concrete warehouse, damp in the extreme, through a frightfully wet winter, and as a result much of it was rotten beyond all thought of using.

Here was work to be done and we were anxious to start immediately, but the owner of the shipyard would not proceed with any of the

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work until I had signed an agreement. This was my first experience with their business methods and it became nearly a complete education in primitive business psychology.

The proceedings that followed were more fun than a side show in a circus. The shipyard man began by asking a price which I thought was exorbitant, at least three times too much. I began at one half of what I expected to give. He called me every name — and the Greeks have a name for everything — (through the medium of a neutral interpreter) that his vivid imagination would give birth to. We shouted, we screamed, we intimidated one another, nearly coming to blows, and after five solid hours of this verbose battle I signed on the dotted line at what seemed a fair compromise.

As soon as this was done his face brightened, the smoke of battle cleared, the tumult and the shouting died, and arm-in-arm we walked to a little café and drank tall glasses of very good beer to our mutual health (which had so recently seemed endangered), to our families, to Greece and America, and in fact to the everlasting peace of the world. Then the work began.

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First the ship was hauled out so that we could examine the bottom. I was particularly afraid of her planking, afraid that worms would have gone into the wood. When she was cleaned we went over each foot with sharp knives, looking for softness in the planking. Fortunately, she was quite sound. Scraping she needed, and after that caulking in the seams, and then two coats of a very good anti-fouling paint.

The little Greek shipyard was most interesting. They have their picturesque caiques, or fishing boats, hauled out stern first. The caïque is their most common type of small sailing vessel, and is an interesting type, double ended, a sweeping sheer, with high sides and vividly painted hulls and sails. Their lines are clean and sweet and from all accounts they are first-class sea boats. In the yard the work was done in what seemed to be the least efficient manner. With the exception of a steam engine for the railway, everything else was of a primitive nature. The adze is still used for shaping wood and the human hand is the principal source of power. A far cry from the modern improvements of the American yards.

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Two Greek riggers were employed and one of them slept aboard as he had no other home. Peter Pappadopolous, rigger No. 1, was our friend, but to our dismay and greater embarrassment he brought aboard with his scanty belongings some of his little friends who were not quite acceptable to our Western minds. As a matter of fact they crawled and very soon our little ship was crawling alive, and it was not until two weeks later, after a concentrated application of various poisonous chemicals, that the last of Peter's little friends were dispersed.

Every detail, small and large, of hull, sails, standing and running rigging, and all gear, had to be checked thoroughly, all replacements made where needed and spare equipment supplied to face the natural possibility of wear and breakage. A new mainsail was ordered as the old sails were badly mildewed, and at least half the old running rigging was replaced. The rope line that we bought was of a poor quality and very expensive. New blocks for the hal-yards had to be made as it was impossible to buy them. Sea stores down to the last small item had to be estimated, bought, and checked over. The

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problem of feeding the crew at sea is a considerable one. The question arises of what type of food to buy but this was quickly solved for us by the necessity of saving money. Tinned food and even salt beef proved very expensive so we decided on a cheaper method of provisioning—dried stores—flour, potatoes, beans, peas, spaghetti, dried fruits, sea biscuits, and the like.

These weeks flew by quickly. There did not seem to be enough time in one day to do all that should be done. Every eventuality had to be considered as the seaman should be ready for anything to happen, and have a definite decision and a quick answer in any emergency. On shore there is more often time to decide, but at sea where things happen with amazing speed one must build up ahead of time a subconscious quickly reflective movement of all faculties to take care of any situation at any time during the day's twenty-four hours. There can be no mistakes where an error cannot be retracted, and where the life of the ship and her people depends upon the essential success of every minute detail. The sea is unforgiving toward those who treat her power lightly. She is the greatest

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natural force on this earth's face, and it is a wise thing to regard her with all proper respect.

Approximately one month after my arrival in Greece we were ready for sea. Two Americans I had met in Athens said they would go with the ship as far as Sicily. This at least was a step in the right direction, and I cabled to New York to send a new crew there to meet me.

Standish Backus owned a share of the vessel and had sailed across the Atlantic with her and through the Mediterranean. His experience would be a great help to us and so he was signed on as boatswain and chief engineer.

Frederick Merrill, less experienced but husky and with a cheerful sense of humor, signed on as cook. A brave man to undertake such a nauseating thankless job.

John Tsilos, a Greek seaman, signed on as professional seaman before the mast.

A day was employed in complying with the formalities. The necessary clearance papers were put in order, health from American and Greek officials, port clearances, etc., and we were officially ready for sea.

During the last week we had taken the ship

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from Perama around to Castella Harbor on Phaleron Bay. This was a small artificial yacht harbor on the west side of the Bay which has Athens rising in the distance at its head. The day before sailing, always a busy time even on the most efficient ships, was particularly harried for us. A new crew was going to sea in a small ship and so the day was occupied in going over the vessel from stem to stern and from main truck to keel bolts. The whole rig, sails, gear, equipment and stores were checked. The water stores came aboard—one hundred and sixty gallons in a large forward tank up in the eyes, one hundred and forty in two galvanized tanks lashed to the deck on either side of the cabin house, and numerous petrol tins wherever there was stowage space. All lists were checked thoroughly. No mistake could be made.

Perhaps at this time a more complete description of the ship would be well. She is very wide for her length and so has large deck space. Her cockpit aft is very comfortable. She has a cabin house which runs from just aft of the main-mast to the cockpit, with a hatch forward leading into the forecabin, one on the port side amidships

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leading into the cabin and two hatches aft for the engine room. Below she has a double state-room aft, lavatory, a main saloon with two berths for sleeping and two sofa seats, a navigation desk and library, and numerous lockers. Forward on the port side a small single state-room, on the starboard the galley, and forward a forecabin where we stowed all the food and spare equipment.

Late in the evening of May 18th Harrison and some other friends came aboard laden with little comforts for the passage—books, magazines, sweets, etc., but above all their sincere good wishes. Very late we sat up in the little cabin discussing the cruise, its possibilities (and some of its probabilities) and drinking healths all around in good Greek cognac. Again the air was filled with embarrassment as it had been in New York. There was too much feeling and such talk as there was, was forced and strained. Our relations had been most pleasant and it is always hard to leave good friends. They went ashore at midnight and we were on our own.

We turned in tired nervously and physically, but anxiously waiting for the morning,

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the day for which we had worked feverishly thinking it would never come. Now we realized that it was just on the other side of a very short sleep. Perhaps our hearts beat faster, out of ordinary tune, for we were four men and a small ship ready for the sea.

III

THE BROKEN WING

THE BROKEN WING

AT three o'clock in the morning, after a few hours of rest, all hands were on deck.

The anchor chain was shortened, and when the mainsail and mizzen had been hoisted the anchor was brought up clear and we were under way.

We motored out of the small harbor at four-twenty, set the forestaysail and jib, shut off the motor then set the main and mizzen and filled her away on a southerly course. The dawn was breaking by this time fine and bright, and delicately pink and red the sky lightened over Athens astern, the white buildings and temples brightening the broad plain all the way to the mountains in the distance. With a light northeasterly wind we gathered way slowly and in company with the fishing fleet sailed out of Phaleron Bay.

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South we stood, clearing Piraeus to starboard and making a southwesterly course for Cape Konkhi, the southern extremity of Salamis Island, and in the direction of the Isthmus of Corinth.

The ship was eagerly responsive to the helm and it is a pleasant feeling to know your ship is a kindly one. All hands were in high fettle, for the spirit of the adventure had dominated us completely. By noon the wind was still light but had backed to the northwest and then into the west, dead ahead, which made our progress very slow.

Porpoises in a large school came alongside in their friendly way and gave us a hearty welcome to their kingdom which we were entering or perhaps invading.

This was a most wonderful day, our hopes were high, the ship as smart as hard work and thought could make her, and the Gulf of Athens was a dream of blue Aegean sea water thickly populated with steep rugged islands, each one looking very bold and independent of his fellows. Excepting the head wind the signs looked favorable. All the ship and gear were

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running smoothly and the crew worked well in entire compatability with the ship.

During the afternoon we drifted rather than sailed, but no one seemed to mind for this was only the prelude. The real work was still ahead, and while time was always to be considered we yet had six thousand miles to sail. Darkness found us still fifteen miles from the southeastern entrance to the Corinth Canal. At eleven that night we came to anchor at Isthmia inside the breakwater. Since the canal is narrow the traffic is of necessity one way at a time, and we had to wait our turn for a line of ships to pass through before we could make our passage.

At one in the morning under power we started through this ancient Canal, more than three miles cut through solid rock walls with lights at convenient intervals. This was a new experience and as the ship carried her way at four knots, the masts, spars and rigging were etched in queer black-and-white compositions against the huge walls. High overhead the stars appeared as tiny blinking lights, our only remote connection with the outside world. The ship's hull loomed black against the sides and

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it was weird to watch these rapidly moving portrayals of our progress through the earth on either side. It seemed that *Stortebeker* had a dual personality. We were living vitally on one, doing the commonplace duties of men on a ship, and watching our ghostly shadows on the beam independently moving along the walled sides of this man-made cut in the earth's surface. Our own figures showed clearly with every movement. There we were—our ship and its crew moving along in the dim lighting with its shadow picture always beside us.

Steering was rendered rather difficult by a swiftly running fair current which ran up on our heels, swinging us dangerously in the narrow passage and threatening to smash us against the high banks. We steered our course between the double row of lights, which apparently dwindled off in the far distance.

At a little before two o'clock, we had nearly run our distance to the northeast entrance. Suddenly, in the dimness ahead, appeared the lights of ships—confusing gleams, as the Canal was supposed to be closed at the other end for our passage alone.

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Reducing the speed of our motor, we approached cautiously, and conning the ship from the bow, I made out the dark forms of a fishing boat and a tug lying across the narrow passage.

We did not see them in time to stop and slowly we proceeded to thread our way between their positions.

The Canal widened abruptly into a basin and just as we thought we were getting free, a huge form crashed into our starboard side aft of the main shrouds. He rammed us obliquely—his bowsprit overhanging our vessel. As I turned I heard the rending sound of shattering wood, a loud final crash and then silence.

I looked and saw the whole stern covered with the wreckage of a broken mast, and a hideous jumble of wire rigging smothered under the fallen sail.

Knowing three men were under there somewhere, with a stark feeling of terror in my heart, I went aft. The motor was stopped. Luckily, one of them had had the presence of mind to shut it off, so our way was checked.

They came up, those three, shaken but smiling—not at the catastrophe, but at their own

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close call. It was a splendid exhibition of coolness. Luck alone saved them from serious injury or death and there they were, grinning at it all. It is a privilege to work with men of that quality.

We were damaged as badly as a partridge that has been shot in one wing and has had to come to earth helplessly. So we came to earth, with our hopes and dreams of the last twenty-four hours badly shattered, and our courage shaken.

Stortebeker anchored at the entrance to the Canal for the night. Daylight brought our true position home to us very realistically. We were crippled. A new mast and wire rigging were needed and modern Corinth was not equipped to give us the necessary service.

A conference with the Canal officials and the captains of the other vessels exonerated us from any liability. But this assurance, though comforting, fell short of any attempt to appreciate the *Stortebeker's* crippled condition and the fact that we were still thousands of miles from home.

It was essential that we stay at the scene of

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the accident until we received instructions from the Consulate in Athens, who would settle our legal rights.

Two days we stayed in Corinth. Excepting for our misfortune we might never have seen this ancient city, made famous by its history, architectural forms, and the preachings of St. Paul.

The isthmus through which the Canal passes is a table-land, flat but rising from two to three hundred feet above its surrounding waters. The early Corinthian games were held on the high plain and from these sporting ventures, the name of Corinthian has been applied through the ages to all amateur sportsmen. Since we were making the passage purely for the love of it, it seemed quite fitting that we should spend some of our time here.

The name of Corinth has a magical lilt to it. Down into our own times through the preachings of St. Paul and other historical references, Corinth and the Corinthians have been familiar terms to most of us. I must confess that on passing through the modern town on the gulf and

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driving back several miles to the old city, I realized with shame that I knew nothing about this seat of a once famous civilization.

We drove for three miles inland through gently undulating country, past fields of well-cultivated wheat and barley toward a lonely-looking mountain situated in the middle of the plain. Gradually the country rose in height and we could see the Gulf on our right and behind us.

Coming closer to the mountain, past small farms and along cypress-bordered roads, we suddenly came upon Corinth, a sleepy little town. At a crossroad was a shop housing on its porch a group of picturesque-looking men contentedly taking in the sun.

Apparently there was nothing here excepting a delightful village and its people, until behind vine-covered walls we found Ancient Corinth, surprisingly hidden from the world. We felt that here was an amazing thing—a city that had given its name to the world and now only wanted to rest on its laurels and doze forever in the pleasant warmth of the sun.

It looked so tiny to have spread such a great

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influence. It was difficult to understand in the quiet atmosphere that this had been the greatest city of Greece and the then known world at one time, coveted by all nations, even by Julius Caesar who conquered it, and later, the Turks and Venetians. It had been the early source of great commercial enterprizes, was noted for its luxury, famous as one of the seats of the early Christian Church, was captured and recaptured by the important powers of the time, destroyed in a cruel wasting by the Romans, rebuilt by the genius of Caesar, passed from one to another, suffering in one case, perhaps, gaining in another, only to be reduced to utter wreckage by an earthquake of the last century. Truly, it is a striking example of the vicissitudes of time and the selfishness and forgetfulness of warring men and nations.

The temples and other forums are now sublimely beautiful ruins, but it was good to see that work was being done to recreate the old order of things.

Acro-Corinth beckoned to us to climb it, so we went up its precipitous face. Two thousand feet we plodded, with tortuous goat paths

SOUTHERN CROSSING

the only guiding marks until we reached its walls and battlements, huge fortifications enclosing the crest.

This was the watchtower and guardian of the city, the citadel, commanding the Gulf, the isthmus, all the plains arounds and seeming to have most of Greece at its feet. Its fate had been the same as that of the city, only its purpose a different one, for the only idea here was one of military expediency. The walls and inner walls were a marvel of engineering genius, and the view from the tops of them I hope I remember always.

For countless miles in every direction the plains spread away with the towering mountains of Peloponnesus to the west, south and southeast and the ever-blue gulf stretching away to the north and northwest. In the northwest the isthmus and the Gulf of Athens, lay beyond.

All this strength and beauty remained; the armies and captains that had fought for it all were only dusty memories, and in their place, venturesome herds of goats had taken charge.

The women keeping an eye on the goats

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seemed benignly unaffected by the grandeur and importance of their surroundings, for their peaceful faces were a living tribute to the success of their simple lives.

Perhaps the warriors who had fought over this same ground had accomplished less than these peasants who took the fortifications on that sunny May morning in a quiet, unassuming way.

Back to realities again! Back to the water, the business of the ship stared us in the face, with the problem of procuring a new mast and sailing westward.

We returned to the modern city near where the ship rested at anchor, and shaking our minds free of the obsessions with which history had filled us, we made use of telephonic and telegraphic communications to clear our position to some extent. After advice from the owner in New York and the Consulate in Athens, and through our own decision, we made plans to carry on to Patras, the next port on our way, seventy miles distant through the Corinthian Gulf.

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However, there was still work to be done. We cleared the wreckage of the mizzen, secured all the wire shrouds on the deck, stowed the sail, and discarded the broken mast which was beyond any hope of repair. It would be possible with a fair wind and the help of the motor, efficient at times, to run this distance in less than a day.

Corinth had spelled near disaster to us and almost grimly we felt that some of the bad luck that had hovered about the place through centuries had been passed on to us.

We had stumbled very badly right at the start and superstitious thoughts preyed on our minds. Had the gentleman been alive, we certainly would have gone over to Delphi across the Gulf, and demanded an audience of the Oracle.

IV
PRIMITIVE GREEK

PRIMITIVE GREEK

THE day broke clear with a fair north easterly wind, so rousing all hands out, we decided to take advantage of the conditions and sail through the Gulf. Under a reduced rig, consisting of mainsail, jib and forestaysail, we got under way from modern Corinth at six-thirty in the morning.

The fulfillment of this day proved to be more wonderful than even a rosy dawn had hinted to us. The Corinthian Gulf is really a small inland sea and like the waters of the Aegæan, its surface is a constantly changing variation of blue serenity.

On both sides the mountains rise sheer, and indeed they say you may take a large vessel alongside of either bank without touching bottom. The mountains near the coast develop into higher ranges in the background which are

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dominated by huge peaks covered with the remainder of the winter snows.

The blue Bay of Salona on the northern shore has Ancient Delphi at its head, once a city of great wealth and splendor and renowned as the home of the famous Oracle. Huge Mount Parnassus, eight thousand feet high, rises east of Delphi, covered with snow, and it is little wonder that the Ancients regarded its peak as the center of the whole world. The crest of Mount Elias to the west of Parnassus made this side of the Gulf a complete picture of towering strength.

On the southern side, Zyria, a tremendous long range, ascends nearly as high as Parnassus, its top also a pure white hood, and its sister-mountains flanking it—vanguards of the rugged Peloponnesian country beyond them to the south.

All day we sailed on crippled strength over this great body of water, awe-struck by its beauty and the grandeur of the surrounding scenery. The wind remained light but fair and we made a reasonable run.

At dusk we were abeam of Cape Psaromyta

PRIMITIVE GREEK

on the northern shore, a lonely promontory extending in solitude into the waters of the Gulf.

A fishing boat drew alongside of us and we raced her, running free, our boom nearly touching her main shrouds for several hours, while the moon rose and helped to light our way.

Fair winds, a lunar path before us, the mountains of snow on either side, we raced through the night. The air was warm and clear and all our lives so far seemed to have led to this breathless romance of sailing our little ship through the mild Grecian waters on that memorable night.

After midnight the breeze freshened considerably, and the tranquil weather was threatened by the increasing strength of the wind. Our pleasant lethargy gave way to the exigencies of harder sailing and we ran through the narrows between capes Rhion and Anti Rhion with the ship straining under the pressure of her sails. Clearing the narrows, which are only a mile wide, we entered the broader waters of the Gulf of Patras and found a very short steep sea making up.

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During the latter part of the night, the wind had backed from northeast to north, and in the early light of the morning had gone into the northwest quarter. Because of the geological nature of these gulfs and bays with their bold shores, the wind plays odd games of trickery, sweeping down from the sides in hard squalls and making the sailing often treacherous for the uninitiated visitor.

In the early dawn, we sailed into the harbor of Patras, an artificial one formed by breakwaters, picked up a pilot, and taking off sail, motored to shore, where we warped and moored stern first to the stone pier, bow anchor out.

As no one had slept all night, we turned in for a few hours of much needed rest.

We were awakened, too soon, by the disturbing noise of numerous voices, apparently on our own deck, also, the heavy sound of many feet covering the planking in a disorderly fashion.

Remembering that this was the scene of my perturbed advent into the country, I went on deck, with sleep still in my eyes and righteous anger in my heart. Who had dared to interrupt

our rest, the heritage of all men on earth, and a blessing of undeniable necessity to sailors in particular?

The whole crew was soon on top, facing what seemed to be at least half the male population of the town. They all had something to sell us—everything, from a new mizzenmast, stepped and rigged, down to sticky boxes of Turkish Delight. I would not have been surprised had a few of the local stock promoters been there to interest us in their never-failing “sound investments.”

After much gesticulating and shouting of threats, we cleared the deck and the ship was saved against what had seemed overwhelming odds, but the question arose—how could we hold it?

Attempts at parley were futile, so we hauled in the gangplank and held a conference. It was decided to station John Tsilos as guard and find the American Consul who no doubt could help us with timely advice.

The Vice Consul suggested that we get in touch with a young English resident, a leading citizen and the local authority on nautical mat-

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ters. This proved a most happy meeting for us, for we made a friend—a man who not only wanted to help us, but understood our problem and could advise us in solving it.

As I said, the waterfront people during their short invasion of our decks had offered us everything from masts to cigars. One even attempted to sell us a good old oak tree, growing in someone's yard, on a neighboring island.

Our new friend advised that we do the job ourselves since we would then avoid the troublesome items of agency fees, and possible graft, thereby saving money—a most necessary consideration.

He said the local cypress was used successfully by the fishermen, having the needed strength and resilience for a mast.

Early on the following morning we drove north in his car, miles away from the city, but always following the curves of the Gulf. For fifteen miles over rough roads, the little car cautiously proceeded until suddenly we were in the middle of the village of Psathapurgas, on the shores of the Gulf, guarded in the rear by the ever-present mountains.

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It was only a small cluster of primitive houses, closely packed together with one narrow street or path through the middle of the group.

The people seemed glad to see us, for no apparent reason, unless it was that we were strangers and therefore interesting guests. Their courtesy to us was terribly grave with not the smallest touch of servility.

We could only listen but our friend, knowing the language, spoke to them with fluency. He told them that we needed a cypress tree for a mast for our vessel which was going to America. They were not impressed. Perhaps they did not know where America was. But they would be glad to help us, which they did.

The principal citizen, the head man no doubt, was teaching school and we were obliged to go to him and interrupt a class to discuss our business. He owned some cypress trees but it would be necessary for him to inspect the trees with us. As he was the only teacher, the children, who had stared at us with less reserve than their dignified elders, were granted a holiday. This of course cemented our popularity, at least with the younger generation.

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The three of us, followed by most of the villagers, walked to the cypress grove, and when I saw the trees, I felt sorry that we had decided on cypress. Straight and strong they stood, their branches growing in uniformity, covered with a delicate blue growth and perfectly matched cones. They stood erect, yielding only slightly to the breeze.

We chose the straightest and the tallest of them all—a pure clean cypress from that untouched forest and then repaired to the home of our host, the owner of the trees, to observe the customary fashion of hospitality.

This consisted of our being seated in the middle of the large room (the only room in the house) where the family lived entirely. Little girls brought us wine and goats' milk; the women, meats and bread, and then served us while we talked to the men.

The whole day had passed and darkness called our hand. We had to return to Patras and to the ship. Going back the next day with an axe and a crosscut saw, we proceeded to cut down our prize. Very soon it lay at our feet and after trimming off the branches, we had the beginning of a new mast.

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Everyone helped us most kindly. The price we paid for the tree was only three dollars but the whole village was opened to us with the sincere friendliness that only simplicity allows.

The people were most interesting and their faces showed a racial purity, which had not been noticeable, in the conglomerate masses of the city folk. I have no doubt that they had come down, in clean lines from the original Greeks.

Passing between the little houses, we saw the figure of a young girl seated on a small balcony close above our heads. As we looked, she removed the veil from her face, quickly, only to replace it in evident embarrassment. We viewed in that moment a singularly madonna-like beauty, with large haunting eyes. I felt that such a resemblance to the concept of classical perfection was never so close.

The women, mostly veiled, and modestly covered with heavy wrappings, bore themselves with great dignity, despite their bare feet. The men were tall and straight with those classic features seen only on ancient coins or on busts seen in comparatively forgotten corners of museums.

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An old priest captured our attention, riding to the fields on a small donkey to work, his long black robe trailing nearly to the earth. His feet were brown and bare. Of the earth he was, but his face was the face of a patriarch, with large, bold features and the look of an eagle in his fine eyes. His massive beard lent to him an unutterable dignity. He was of the earth in which he worked, yet he seemed a part of the spirit world, which we moderns rarely glimpse.

All the men of the village gave us their time, helping cheerfully, until at last we carried the tree on the shoulders of seventeen of them down to the sea and launched it into the water. The children, who were enjoying their second day of escape from their books, watched with naive delight.

A tugboat belonging to our English friend came to tow the spar to Patras and after farewells to the friendly villagers, we departed from that delightfully simple place, back to our troubled existence.

We employed casual labor to shape the mast and rig it under our supervision. Luckily, the wire rigging was intact and excepting a chain

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plate which had pulled out, there was no serious damage in that quarter.

Under the clever strokes of two men working with the adze, the cypress tree soon lost its own identity. When the rougher work was completed the transformation began. Slowly and carefully, the tree was reduced to a slender springy mast, still green but with every promise of a splendid life of service.

The work was done rapidly, the mast finished in two days, new crosstrees cut, and then it was ready for the rigging.

There are no sheerlegs or derricks of any sort on the shorefront of Patras, so the question of how to step the mast became a serious one.

Happily this was solved for us by the friendly captain of a near-by British cargo ship, out of Liverpool. At one o'clock in the afternoon we were alongside the steamer under power, and made fast bow and stern lines on his starboard side, under his forward cargo boom.

Lines were made fast to the mast which we had towed in the water astern, it was hoisted upright by the steam winch, and after ten minutes of nervous juggling around, it was eased into the step.

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The steamer captain would not accept one cent for his trouble or his crew's time (all of whom had turned out to help us), so we motored back to our berth very much indebted to him. The riggers came aboard the following morning and late in the afternoon the shrouds were set up, the sail bent on, and our broken wing was replaced. We were relieved and happy as we were ready for sea once more, exactly one week from the accident in the canal.

Our clearance papers were in order by night, a few fresh supplies were brought aboard and everything was made shipshape.

The entire English colony gave a dinner party in our honor at a local hotel, after which we all motored to one of the hosts' houses to spend a noisy, carefree evening, drinking and singing. It was good fun, forgetting the seagoing life for a few hours, the perfect way to spend our last night on shore.

V

SIROCCO

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SIROCCO

Tuesday, May 29th—

Underway from Patras at half-past eight in the morning. All hands are glad to be sailing once more. The day is clear and warm, the wind, northerly all morning but westerly in the afternoon, making it dead ahead. We all wonder if this is a prediction of *Stortebeker's* future luck. From Cape Araxos to Missolonghi (where Byron died) there was a strong westerly which held us back; this, and a miserable short sea.

About noon the port mizzen shrouds became slack due to faulty rigging. Backus and I had a merry time going aloft and setting them up. The shrouds are not spliced in an eye but are led around the mast and clamped together, a poor and dangerous arrangement. Working aloft was uncomfortable as the green mast was

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swinging with the flexibility of a riding whip.

Late in the afternoon the wind came north west and we laid our course for Cape Skinari on the island of Zante—west southwest.

A beautiful night with a freshening north-west wind and a full moon. The islands are very high and clearly visible in the moonlight. Cephalonia and Zante ahead. We know that in the fading light a few miles to the northwest, is Ithaca, once the island kingdom of Ulysses. Remembering his wanderings, we thought of him and a part of Tennyson's immortal description which seemed to fit so aptly in our case:

"The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks. The long day wanes, the slow moon climbs, the deep moans round with many voices. Come, my friends, push off, and sitting well in order, smite the sounding furrows for my purpose holds to sail beyond the sunset and the baths of all the western stars until I die. It may be that the gulfs will wash us down; it may be we shall touch the happy isles and see the great Achilles whom we knew. Though much is taken, much abides, and though we are not now that strength which in old days moved earth and heaven, that which we are we are — one equal temper of heroic hearts, made weak by time and fate, but strong in will, to strive, to seek, to find, but not to yield."

SIROCCO

Wednesday, May 30th —

It has taken from early morning until four in the afternoon to go between Cephalonia and Zante and into the Mediterranean. A heavy westerly swell and set are checking our way. These are confused with a short chop from the northeast. The ship is slatting badly in the light air and making a terrific noise. We rigged boom tackles.

All day the course has been west southwest with a light northwest wind.

The sun set clear as a bell (easterly wind as sure as hell—we hope). Clear sky and horizon. The evening is fair with the moon on the wane. We sail in a world consisting of a cloudless sky, a gentle northwest wind and a rolling head sea. Cephalonia and Zante are now only hazy smudges on the dim horizon astern. Farewell to Greece!

Thursday, May 31st—

Flat calm nearly all day—nothing of interest happening. The ship rolls very badly and the noise is awful. At four-thirty we sighted a brig to starboard which later crossed our bow about four miles away.

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Friday, June 1st—

An uneventful day. Baffling head winds resulting in the ship's making little progress. She seems heavy in the head so we shifted the spare chain aft to lighten her forward and give more life to her motion. The mainsail is badly cut and I believe that hinders her. *Stortebeker* seems painfully slow and if we continue to have westerly winds it will be a long time before we sight the Rock of Gibraltar. The sun set in a cold grey sky. It was overcast all night.

Saturday, June 2nd—

A blood-red sunrise, punctuated with rain squalls from the west which are cold and cheerless. The day is bright and the wind is strengthening from west southwest. The sea is making up but we are moving faster than we have since we left Greece. All hands are wet clear through to the skin and the little cabin is a welcome comfort on the off watches.

We hope to get a landfall on the coast of Italy to-night. As we have not yet acquired a sextant, all our navigation is by dead reckoning. The patent log does not register properly,

SIROCCO

so if we hit the coast within twenty miles we will be lucky.

The wind has been very strong all night, and we are shortened down to storm jib, forestay-sail, and a single reefed main and mizzen.

Sunday, June 3rd—

It has blown hard from the southwest all day. No doubt this is a sirocco from the African coast, as it is blowing gale strength and the atmosphere is warm and very wet. A huge short sea has made it very rough and below, the whole ship is on end.

About noon we sighted mountains through the murk a little north of west. Very faint they seemed, but obviously the Calabrian mountains of southern Italy.

Night came and the wind increased. It is blowing very hard and we are jogging slowly under only a double-reefed main and forestay-sail. All night long *Stortebeker* has been diving into the seas with a sickening, jerky motion. At four in the morning, the wind abated in force slightly.

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Monday, June 4th—

The gale continues and life aboard has ceased to be at all comfortable. The ship above and below decks is a welter of water. Everything is wet and it has grown colder. Our lives have changed. The complacent monotone of our several lives has given way to a harder, sterner purpose. We are at odds with a brutal force of Nature that is using all its great power to wear us down in body and in spirit.

At nine in the evening we took a bearing on a flashing light which proved to be Cape Stilo on the Calabrian coast. There is an ominous haze hanging closely over everything. The sky and the sea are very close together; the one, pushing us up on its surface, the other, trying to smother us under its weight.

Tuesday, June 5th—

The haze is clearing and the wind has backed to easterly. The mountains of Calabria have been visible on the starboard beam, perhaps ten miles away. At eight-thirty in the morning, we had a faint glimpse of Mount Aetna—only a vague, quick sight of its peak. The shore and the base of the mountain were obscured.

SIROCCO

By this time the wind had eased in its strength and we set the large jib and mizzen.

Wednesday, June 6th—

Beginning in the morning with a hard southwest squall at six o'clock, which parted the jib sheet and tore out the jib to the boltropes, we have had hard unsettled weather all day.

It is no longer blowing in gale strength and has hauled from southwest to west and then completely around the compass. At least this is a good sign—from backing dangerously, the wind has gone to the more normal procedure of hauling around clockwise.

However, it has been shifty at the best. We are making very poor headway. The wind is dying, leaving the remnants of large seas, and again we are rolling and slatting unmercifully. All night *Stortebeker* has heaved and tossed, wildly and savagely, like a person in delirium. Poor little ship—she looks shabby already after only nine days at sea.

Thursday, June 7th—

A weird yellow sunrise and rising easterly breeze started off the day. An Italian fishing

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boat, the *Michele*, came alongside at seven o'clock and in smatterings of French, English and Italian, we conversed back and forth. They were very glad to see us and wanted to know if we had known Dillinger, back in the States, and if he were still at large.

They were glad to get some of our excellent Greek cigarettes, in return for which they supplied us with a few fish they had just caught—a treat for us as it meant our first fresh food after ten days at sea. We drifted apart after mutual thanks and good wishes, always evident between men who sail the seas.

The day was spent in rolling and slatting about in a virtual calm off Cape Spartivento on the Calabrian coast. Strong currents hold us back—no doubt originating in the Messina Straits and sweeping forcefully around the toe of the boot of Italy. The day has been fair and the sun set clear for the first time in many days.

Fred Merrill, whose cooking, under extreme difficulty, has been a marvel to the rest of us, drove us all on deck for several hours, while in the secret recesses of the foul-smelling galley, he turned out a dinner worthy of a hotel chef.

SIROCCO

It is a timely place to state that any man who can cook in a small boat in rough weather deserves more than passing praise.

The result of his labours was balm to our weary spirits. We ate and we drank, until we could hold no more.

Yacht *Stortebeker*, Luxurious Mediterranean Cruise

Anniversary Dinner

(Piraeus to Messina — twenty-one days)

MENU

Apéritif	(plenty) Grog a la Stortebeker
Soup	Consomme
Entrée	Spaghetti Messina
Pièce de resistance	Salmon Spartivento
	avec
	Poisson Michele
Dessert, or	
Purgative	Fresh stewed fruit Purga
Bread	Agé Patras (ten days)
	Cafe or tea
Wine	Choice Domestica Patras, 1934
	Music by the ship's orchestra
	“Stormy Weather”
	“It Aint Gonna Rain No More”
	(by request)

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Friday, June 8th—

Light airs from the eastward all morning, off Capes Spartivento and D'ell Armi. The Italian coast is picturesque and colorful. At three in the afternoon we met a hard rain squall, which came down through the straits toward us, advancing slowly but surely. When it hit us, it blew our spare jib out to the boltropes. That makes two jibs we have lost in as many days. The canvas is rotten.

We ran all afternoon due west with a fresh northerly breeze. Backus, the chief engineer, tried to start the motor, to no avail. It had evidently run its course for the time being. As it is quite impossible to attempt even to go through the straits with a head wind and sea, we headed the ship for Taormina on the east coast of Sicily.

Closing in on the Sicilian coast, we were all impressed by the beauty of it. Small villages are perched hundreds of feet up from the sea on steep cliffs, and in the background, the mountains rise, gigantic. Some of them are perfectly straight peaks, extending alone above the range.

In the purple light of the sunset, with the

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mountains gradually softening into pastel shades, we ran into the little anchorage of Taormina. The town is tucked in the cliffs and sheltered by the snow-covered mass of Mount Aetna, high above it, a little to the south and west. Surely this is one of the beauty spots of the world!

We anchored, close to shore. It was good to feel the iron of the anchor and chain once more holding us close to the earth. Everyone was tired from an overdue passage. The ship was weary and strained from the hard usage of the sea and all hands were glad at the thought of a quiet night free from the burden of long night watches. We had earned a sailor's rest, so we took it, sleeping deeply like tired children.

VI

TAORMINA AND MESSINA

TAORMINA AND MESSINA

A BABBLE of voices broke into the prolonged depths of an otherwise unbroken sleep. This seemed to have become our fate—in each port to be awakened prematurely by the unreserved curiosity of people on shore. Remembering my own curious or longing attitude toward ships when I had been on land, and also realizing the reversed feeling toward intruders one has, I understood, perhaps for the first time in my life, the difference between the man of the sea and his distant cousin on shore. There is a vast dissimilarity—between them there is the breadth and depth of all the world's oceans.

It was a police inspector who had come to inform us officially and disagreeably that we could not land. Taormina, he said, had no status as a port and therefore lacked the proper officials to permit our entry as a foreign ship.

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Our argument was that we had had a hard passage of eleven days and that all hands were tired and in need of fresh food and rest. The head winds in the straits and failure of our motor to start had driven us in under duress. Since our papers were in order, including a blanket Italian visa for the ship, it seemed only reasonable that we should be allowed to land, after a proper medical examination, and the inspection of our credentials by the civil authorities.

However, he was adamant, refused to come aboard, and left with the warning that should we attempt to land, we would be arrested immediately. This was a rather unpleasant reception to compensate for the hard days we had weathered at sea, but we told him very definitely that we had every intention of going ashore, in spite of the authorities, if they would not care to see our papers. We certainly wouldn't consider merely sitting on deck and dreaming hopelessly about the pleasures that such a lovely-looking place as Taormina no doubt would offer us.

A cheery, pleasant English voice changed the reverie and alongside, in a small single scull,

TAORMINA AND MESSINA

dressed in shorts, topped off with a pith helmet, appeared one who evidently had a different attitude toward our appearance in Taormina. He came aboard, introduced himself as Percy Trewhilla, an English resident, and upon our invitation, sat down with us to a breakfast of fresh food which a friendly boatman had kindly secured to relieve the monotony of our temporary exile.

We had enjoyed a good meal and met a friend. Bodily and spiritually we were all cheered and the disagreeable incident of the previous few minutes was forgotten for the time.

The land looked so inviting with Taormina perched in tiers, precipitously rising hundreds of feet over our head, that we could not wait to step on shore. All the houses and villas, protected by walls covered with masses of climbing flowers, combined to present a most brilliant picture in the sunlight of that early June morning.

It has been said that Taormina is one of the world's most beautiful spots and it certainly looked so to us coming in from the sea. We were most anxious to see it from those high cliffs

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which seemed to reach endlessly toward the sky.

The morning was passed in a pleasant leisurely fashion, talking with our new friend, who was keenly interested in our ship and the long voyage she was making. We accepted gladly when he invited us to luncheon at his home. This was situated at the head of a small cove, flanked by high rocks on either side. We rowed around the headland to it. On the way we explored a fascinating blue grotto where the sea has cut deeply into the rocks. There was a weird, almost supernatural lighting, caused by the reflecting sunlight coming up under the blue water. We remained in the grotto quite a while, it was so strange to us, so unnaturally lovely.

Around the headlands and promontories we rowed, outside the line of surf that lifted and rose to great crashing heights against the sea-beaten rocks, and then resurged seaward only to reform and come marching in against the rocks once more. Past masses of jagged stone and across long swelling seas we came into a small bay and landed our boat on a sandy beach right in front of the house.

TAORMINA AND MESSINA

Only a sailor, or a man with a great love for the sea would have built this place, massive and strong, nearly in the water, with the blue Mediterranean lapping at its feet. Though rugged and safely protected in front, behind were gardens of flowers, beautifully arranged, rising up in terraces.

Unexpected as we were, we were received with cordial warmth. After a delightful luncheon, so refreshing to us, good food and pleasant companionship, succeeding hard days in the confined space of the ship, we were driven up to the town of Taormina on the heights.

It would be superfluous to say that Taormina is lovely. Sitting on the tops of the cliffs it appeared a precious jewel in a rare setting. The town is a time-mellowed Old World product, with remaining architectural influences of the various races that have at one time or another coveted and occupied its charms.

The Greeks, Romans, Venetians and even the Normans are among the conquering nations who have felt the beauty of this place. It does seem odd, however, to see a large building of stern Norman foreboding, inhabited by smiling-faced Sicilians.

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The Ancient Greeks, always with an eye for perfection of architectural forms and advantageous situations, had happily combined both of these at the top of the little town in a famous theater, which is still well preserved.

One may sit there and well imagine time rolling back through the centuries and presenting the portrait of their dramatic art, cleverly contrived in this splendid setting, with the waters of the Mediterranean receding in the distance into dim haze, and with Mount Aetna, snow-covered, dominating the whole scene.

Someone has said that the devil must have taken Christ to the top of Taormina when he offered Him the world, and from our own observation it would have been the logical site. The world looks inviting in a perspective view from such a vantage point.

Late in the afternoon, we descended to the home of our host where an unpleasant surprise awaited us. Our friend of the early morning, the police inspector with his men were standing in readiness for us with handcuffs to take us to the local dungeon for disregarding the warning. This was a little disconcerting after such a

TAORMINA AND MESSINA

pleasantly spent day and the thought of a possible night or days and nights spent in a filthy jail was not very cheerful.

Once more the day was turned from a restful quiet into bickering and arguing, with the usual dramatics, and only after our host took our side most firmly were we permitted freedom. This, when we had passed a medical examination given by a kindly, old-fashioned doctor who was more than a little amused at the whole proceeding and the bombastic official. We also phoned the harbor authorities in Messina who sanctioned our hitherto unhallowed arrival, before the local police made out proper entry papers, allowing us the freedom of Sicily.

Our friend had performed his duty. Smilingly, he left us. We had complied with the regulations, and our entry into the sovereign State of Italy was stamped officially.

The honors may have seemed even but when the truce was called I think we had the weather gauge — despite the handcuffs.

Two delightful days we spent in this paradise of color and panoramic wonderment. Our English friends continued to show us the glor-

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ries of Taormina, until we felt that our hearts could hold no more.

Unfortunately, Standish Backus and Fred Merrill were obliged to return to America by steamer. They were already several weeks late in their own plans. Meanwhile, a mechanic had progressed, working on the motor, until it ran after a fashion.

We found out by cabling to New York that two men were waiting to join the ship in Gibraltar. Backus and Merrill had to leave but they said they would take the ship to Messina, so we cabled to send the crew there.

It was difficult leaving Taormina, as the place had a strange magnetism for us all.

On the morning of June eleventh, we got underway from the Bay of Taormina, headed for Messina, a distance of more than twenty-five miles. The wind was ahead all day and with this and the terrific currents running through the straits, our progress was very slow. All day we beat against it with the motor running, keeping close to the Sicilian shore to avoid the worst of the currents.

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The coast is impressively high from Taormina to Messina and despite our annoyance of making such poor time, the scenery compensated greatly for the time loss. All through the afternoon we fought the relentless currents and a steady head wind. It was not until after ten o'clock that night that we rounded the lighthouse on the breakwater. Taking off our canvas we motored into the busy harbor of Messina.

We had signalled for a pilot when we were still outside but they did not come alongside until we were well in the harbor and then they came at us on both sides.

As we had sailed so far without one, we felt in no particular need of help at that late date and took her into anchor ourselves, with the bow anchor out and stern lines fast to the shore.

Messina is a modern city, rebuilt after the tragic earthquake of 1908 when seventy-five thousand lives were snuffed out. It is a provincial city, important as a seaport because of its commanding position in the Straits. But there the interest ends and the thought of waiting

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here for a new crew was not a fascinating one.

Backus and Merrill departed. I was very sorry to see them go for they had been a great help and cheerful shipmates under discouraging circumstances.

John Tsilos was paid off at the Consulate since the ship could no longer afford the comparative luxury of a single paid hand. In short, *Stortebeker's* cash accounts were quite low on the credit side. John sailed on the steamer *Aventino* for Piraeus and I was left completely alone — with a ship in fair condition, full of sea stores, but with practically no money and absolutely no crew!

The arrival of an American yacht in Messina was an unusual occurrence, and crowds soon appeared, their curiosity aroused. Rumor gave birth to rumor. It finally came back to me that I was an American millionaire (magic word!) sailing alone on a vacation. The usual waterfront sharks came aboard and tried to sell me everything including the lighthouse on the mole. My protests that I had no money were dismissed or forgotten. Unlimited credit was mine for the mere asking.

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It was a funny situation to be in — amusing at first, but a nuisance later. It was impossible to sit on deck without attracting a gaping crowd, so I went below and read books for three days, with occasional excursions ashore after dark.

One chap, Troitto Michele, by name, a ship chandler and interpreter by profession, was most persistent and became quite “pally,” even insisting that I call him Mike. He said if I was “short” he could get me any amount to two hundred English pounds — with the ship as security, of course. I did not bite on his silver-baited hook.

The English language, cheerily spoken, is a wonderful cure for all depression in a foreign land and this time it came from the deck of a British tanker, the *Oilshipper*, which had anchored during the night, so close that her counter almost covered little *Stortebeker*.

They were in from Galveston, discharging oil, and they asked me aboard for lunch. My impression of the British Merchant Marine had always been one of admiration, but the friendship with the officers of this ship that followed

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during the next two weeks, more than increased my respect for the whole British Empire.

The crew of two were still en route from Gibraltar and the people from the *Oilshipper* did everything to break the monotony of my solitary existence.

Time was hanging heavily on their hands as they were waiting for orders, so we had some pleasant times together. The Italian salvage ship *Salvatore* was anchored on the other side of us. The owner's representative aboard was a huge, jolly German, an ex-submarine officer, and he joined in this little clique that we had formed. It was a queer combination — three British ships' officers, a German who had fought against them in the war, and an American yachtsman.

Needless to say, the days that followed were filled with luncheons, dinners and drinking, all topped off with many stories of the sea. Over brimming glasses, the British gave us strange yarns of happenings in odd corners of the world, unknown to the tourist trade, tales of gales in the North Sea Patrol, typhoons in the China Sea, hard passages around the Horn and

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days of unrelenting calms under the hot equatorial sun. The German told us of submarine work in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, and of more peaceful salvage work (the strange contrast there is between war and peace) in the eastern Atlantic. Very humbly I added my own few seagoing ventures in small sailing craft.

Again the sea had brought together several of its people in fellowship for a few pleasant hours of reminiscence, to remain for a while in close companionship, drink a friendly glass, each to tell his own story and then sail away to his own destiny.

As we talked, every man appreciated what had brought us together and that we each added to the experiences of the other, but that the sea which had drawn us close in understanding would soon separate us. Unusual philosophies were not unexpected and were brought out in the conversation, for the seaman has a broad view and his vision has no limitation.

A week of this and we parted. The *Oilshipper* went to sea, *Salvatore* went out under orders, and we said good-bye. Yet it was not the good-bye of people on land with the hesitancy

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of "We shall meet again, perhaps" — but rather the final farewell of the sailor, the strong handshake and the realization that the world's oceans are large and the chance of future meetings most improbable.

There is no sadness in these brief meetings. The seaman feels as the Psalm expresses:

"The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth—so is every man that is born of the spirit."

July fourth was a real day of celebration for *Stortebeker's* one-man crew. The American schooner yacht, *Ramah*, carried a Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Forbes and party into Messina for supplies. They were a delightful group of people but unfortunately they only spent a short hour in the harbor before getting underway for Patras and other Grecian ports we had just left.

Later, Edward Smith and Richard Forscher, the new crew, arrived by train from Naples, where they had landed from Gibraltar. They were both young and full of enthusiasm for the

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passage after the trying month of waiting in Gibraltar. They were glad to find the ship and I was as happy to see them. As everything was soon put in order — necessary supplies, clearances, etc., we decided to sail in the morning.

The evening was spent exchanging news of the ship for news of home. The past of annoying incidents was quickly forgotten in our mutual desire to get to sea.

Smith and Forscher were each twenty-two years old. I was twenty-six. Our average weight was then one hundred and thirty-five pounds, so we were light in weight, besides experience. But all three of us were fit and eager and we faced the 5500 miles ahead in high glee and with a song in our hearts.

VII

SARDINIA AND MAJORCA

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BY WAY OF SARDINIA
AND MAJORCA

Thursday, July 5th —

Underway from Messina at 10 A. M. Dick Forscher volunteered to do the cooking. As he was the only one aboard who understood motors, and since he liked handling tools, he was also elected engineer and carpenter. Ned Smith was made bosun and I remained skipper and navigator.

The wind was light northeast, ahead, so we went out under power alone, carrying a fair current through the Straits. Between the rock of Scylla and the whirlpools of Charybdis of Homeric legend we passed. Here it was that Ulysses lost six of his men to Scylla, so we took our chances on Charybdis, staying closer to the Sicilian coast.

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The fishing fleet was out, using the currents in a remarkable manner. The boats would get in the edge where the current and counter-current swept in opposite directions and would hang suspended while making their catch. Many of them hung in the whirls and eddies of Charybdis as we passed.

Outside, beyond Faro Point, the northeastern extremity of Sicily and clear of the Straits, we stopped the motor, put on all sail, main, mizzen, forestaysail and jib, and squared away on a westerly course. The wind had now hauled around from northeast to a steady southerly.

The day has been clear and the visibility excellent. From the ship we could see the Calabrian coast. Stromboli, actively volcanic, and almost an exact cone, lies twenty-five miles to the starboard. Old Aetna lay to the port forty miles south and there just before dusk we saw them both, over sixty miles apart, smoking ominously with the same destructive idea as their chief purpose — that, and to impress with the dignity of their awful beauty.

A clear starry night came on, hiding everything except a lighthouse that was flashing and

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then we saw Stromboli majestically being purged of its hot inner wrath of sparks of hot lava like shooting stars defying the laws of gravity. Twenty-five miles was a close enough acquaintance and while we admired the view we did not care to brook its obviously bad temper.

Friday, July 6th —

In the morning we saw floating pieces of pumice stone which unquestionably came from Stromboli, either on last night's or some recent activity. All morning we were becalmed, giving the new crew a fine opportunity to familiarize themselves with the ship and her gear.

At nine o'clock we came abeam of the Island of Vulcano, the home of Vulcan and his forge, and apparently the father of all the volcanoes, hence the name. Later in the morning the wind came westerly, very light, and the afternoon, was spent tacking between the islands and the Sicilian Coast. Late in the afternoon the wind came northeast, steadying as if it might hold on.

At six-thirty we had the most amazing sunset I have ever seen. The sun and the sky in the west were a brilliant orange-red under the

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fringes of a black sky overhead. All the mountains of Sicily were bathed in a blazing purple glory. We all watched — it seemed for hours — this pageantry of marching colors until they were all overwhelmed into shadows, deepening slowly into pitch-black night.

Saturday, July 7th —

All morning the wind held northeast, carrying us along the northern coast of Sicily at about four and a half knots. The ship is slow but handles well. Ned Smith and Dick brought with them a much-needed sextant and also a barometer. The glass had shown a steadiness at about 30.25 and as the average should read around 30.00 in this part of the world we put it down as over-reading about twenty hundredths of an inch.

At local noon of this day, I took my first sight at sea for latitude. Smith held the watch and I took the sight, nervously wondering what the result would show. Working the sight it showed our latitude to be $38^{\circ} 10' \text{ N.}$ Our dead reckoning put us pretty accurately on $38^{\circ} 14' \text{ N.}$ by cross-bearings so the sight was approxi-

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mately four minutes out or four miles to the south of our dead reckoning position.

I purposely started taking sights while we were still within sight of land so that any errors could be accurately checked. This first observation was a thrilling moment and I shall never forget it. It is strange to be in such close touch with hitherto unknown forces, for multitudes of doubts arise. You do not know whether you have joined the sun to the horizon, whether the instruments are correct, the time, and finally there is a vague wondering as to one's calculations, which must of course be exact.

After all this, the newness of the contact with the sun's never-failing movement in time, the doubts, and the fears of failure, it was good to find it so simple and to know that we were only four miles out of position with the sight. The future looked a bit more prepossessing.

Ned and Dick when they delivered the sextant to me thought I was an old hand at the game, and that celestial navigation was a casual matter with me. Little do they know that I am experimenting; but it is better not to tell or they won't sleep a wink at night for wondering where we are.

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At six in the evening Palermo was abeam and Mount Pellegrino a distant memory. We were moving now and they were soon left astern, since we were sailing steadily at five knots — the wind steady northeast.

At 12:10 A. M., Cape St. Vito light bore due south three miles and taking our departure there, we changed the course which had been west to west northwest toward Cape Carbonara on the lower end of Sardinia, one hundred and sixty miles away.

Sunday, July 8th —

The northeasterly still holds steadily, and all day we have sailed before it at an even five knots. The sea is as smooth as any New England lake; the air is warm and life a joy. The ship steers with amazing accuracy on a broad reach. It is really as if we had a gyroscopic compass and wheel, as the helmsman merely stands by and watches the compass card.

Below decks *Stortebeker* is as quiet as a grave in a country churchyard and on your off watches it is hard to imagine she is sailing. There is no sound of rushing water, no straining or retching, and this is good.

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The afternoon has been occupied with the usual duties and I have been busy taking observations and working out lines of position with the Weems method. This is proving very simple and a consolation to my unmathematical mind. Fortunately the sea has been smooth, for the steadiness of the ship makes the taking of the sights an easy and pleasant task.

Monday, July 9th —

Early in the morning the wind backed from northeast to north and then died a natural death, leaving us becalmed to enjoy a typically warm bright Mediterranean morning, as blue as the cruising tour advertisements. This sea upon occasion does live up to its advance notices.

At sunset we sighted land far off bearing northwest, three quarters west, approximately forty miles away according to dead reckoning. It was only a very slight rising over the rim of the sea, against the afterglow of the setting sun, but definitely etched in the clear atmosphere. Porpoises came alongside just at dark and showed to us their swiftly flashing forms, gracefully

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cutting the darkening water until all the light had gone and they were only vivid trails of fire. It was beautiful yet eerie to see the calmness of the sea turned into a madness of living flames. For hours they stayed with us and then as swiftly as they had come, they went away, leaving us alone again with the sea and the quiet night.

Tuesday, July 10th —

All night the calm remained with only occasional faint cat's-paws from the south. The night was flat, silent and without interest. Headway was impossible and each man at the wheel had the same difficulty keeping awake because of the utter absence of any activity. Even the usual noises of the ship had ceased. It was like Purgatory — a transition from the full life to another plane, a step toward death, yet actually neither one thing nor the other.

The heaviness of the night was appalling to the active mind and imagination. Morning brought relief even if the wind was still dead. Noon came with a freshening breeze from the southwest and a good sight of land bearing west northwest, whereupon we changed our course

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to west. An afternoon of fair sailing followed at about a five knot average speed, but by 7 P. M. the short spurt gave way to another calm which lasted as before the whole night through.

Wednesday, July 11th —

A slightly falling glass and light wind ahead brought the new day to us and Sardinia close ahead and a little on the starboard hand. Cape Carbonara was abeam at seven o'clock as a rolling sea was making up from the west. The glass continued to drop and all day the ship rolled badly. Boom tackles were rigged. By night we had made little way along the southern tip of Sardinia.

The pilot book says Sardinia is unhealthy. How true it is! All night long a heavy dew fell and rank odors prevailed, making the air thick and oppressive.

Thursday, July 12th —

Flat calm all day. Cape Spartivento abeam two miles north at ten in the morning. The glass has dropped below 30.00 which means with a correction, that it is 29.80. It looks as if some-

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thing is going to happen very shortly. At nine in the evening, Toro Island was abeam and we made our departure for Majorca. But still the calm stayed with us and we drifted to the westward with faint airs from the south.

Friday, July 13th —

Ned Smith was swimming over the starboard side early in the morning when I happened to see a fin on the port perhaps fifty feet away, but headed very definitely and surely for *Stortebeker*. The cry of "Shark!" is a terrifying one at sea, but Ned said later, "It is worse when you are actually in the water." We got him aboard in record time and our finny friend had to look elsewhere for his breakfast. It was not what you would term a particularly close call but it was close enough under the circumstances as the big fellow knifed alongside thirty seconds too late. For days afterward, our bathing was done with buckets on the solid security of the good oaken deck.

What joy it is to feel the good fresh wind that makes ships sail, big ones and small ones impartially! It came from the north northwest

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about noon, steady and strong, and after more than four days of maddening calms it was balm to our impatient hearts to have it freshening on the quarter, driving us along as we had not sailed since we left Messina.

Saturday, July 14th —

All night long it blew with increasing force. For the first time since I have sailed *Stortebeker* we are really moving in sailing-ship fashion, with everything taut and drawing and the rail well down. Life is a merry one aboard ship when the wind is at your heels and the vessel begins to snarl and bite at the bone in her teeth.

Perhaps nowhere else can you capture the same exhilaration as in sailing a small ship at sea under strong conditions. It gives the mind a lift, the heart an added beat and a spring to one's tread. These are times that old men talk about before their comfortable fires with a pipe in one hand and a warming drink in the other. When one is old these things are necessary — small comforts and a soft chair in which to doze and recapture the memories. But here we had a time which would soon be a memory — a

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youthful moment of disregard and careless thrilling to the sound of the wind and the sea; and a certain sense of pride that our little ship was smashing the sea into bubbles and that we were marching across the earth in the finest way that a man may do it. As Masefield has said in writing of a steeplechase (and well it fitted into our own thoughts):

“Living in houses, sleeping in bed
Going to business, all seemed dead;
Dead as death to that rush of strife
Pulse for pulse with the heart of life.”

Our minds were put at ease by this wind which was quickly clearing our brains of the tension the days of calm had caused. Our bodies were refreshed and our hearts made glad by this song that the wind was singing to us.

The wind has steadied in the north, coming no doubt out of the Gulf of Lyons, which is famed for its strong weather. Night found us with the situation unchanged except for the glass which having risen all day, attained its normal level of 30.25 by midnight.

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Sunday, July 15th —

The wind still holds strong although it has hauled from north to east. At 6:30 A. M. we made a good landfall—Majorca appearing off the starboard bow northwest by north, about ten miles. We have run well over two hundred miles from Sardinia and this was my first landfall with the Weems system.

The run from Greece to Sicily had been of necessity, on dead reckoning alone, and from Messina to Sardinia very much the same, as I had not then had the system down pat.

From Sardinia I stopped the practicing and put myself to work systematically. At four o'clock yesterday, I had a fix with the last of three excellent sights which gave us a good position with our dead reckoning. When Majorca was finally sighted it gave me a strong feeling of confidence that the instrument, the time, and my own calculations were coördinating properly.

So the veil was withdrawn, the mystery dispelled and from that time (the landfall at Majorca) the navigation passed the experimental stage and become routine. The thrill gave way

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to a different feeling—the satisfactory one of accurate accomplishment.

Cabrera Island, a small spot a few miles south of Majorca, came up to us at the right time and the course was changed to southwest by west. We ran off more before the increasing easterly. The day is bright and clear. Majorca and Cabrera are most lovely in the distance. Having heard so much of the former it is hard not to stop in after ten varied days at sea. But funds are low and any port means spending money, so we look at the shore and think how nasty the coast must be, how difficult the harbors must be to enter and that the people are probably uninteresting or disagreeable.

We imagine everything but the pleasures and the comforts that we know are really there. It is the old philosophy of self-denial for material good. But deep in our hearts we know that is not the reason that we do not put in at Majorca. We are carrying a fair easterly wind and I do not think at that moment Circe and her sirens could have lured us from the straight and narrow path that we were sailing.

VIII
WESTERLY GALE

WESTERLY GALE

A LEVANTER is described in an encyclopaedia as being an east wind prevailing on the African coast during the summer, related to the northeast trade winds. The Mediterranean pilot agrees with this substantially but also adds a few more vivacious touches particularly in relation to the levanter and the Rock of Gibraltar. However, everyone agrees that it is an easterly of a rather strong nature which would seem a good tonic for a ship sailing to the westward. We seemed to be in for more or less of a levanter, judging from the prevailing conditions.

Monday, July 16th —

The wind holds fresh from the east and what with last night's livid sunset and this morning's mackerel sky whipping the cloud-ends into mares' tails, it bids fair to stay in the same quar-

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ter. Our course remains southwest by west to put us near to Formentera on the starboard hand, another one of the Balearic Islands. The sea has been making up and the short steep chop which comes up slightly on the port quarter, renders the steering rather hard work but good fun for a while.

At noon countless porpoises appeared charging at us like a field of horses close on the line of a fox. When they reached us it was as if the hounds had been checked, for they either forgot where they were going or changed their porpoise minds. They stayed with us. It was good sport and we felt sure they thought we had just come to amuse them. All through the afternoon they played about the ship and what with the quick blue seas, crowned with wave tops that were soon cut off and thrown to the wind, and these gracefully mad creatures all about, it was a sight worth seeing—another memory we added to an already increasing store.

The ship was plunging by now and the rising glass (it was now 30.33 at 4 P. M.) was a reasonable portent of our levanter holding its own.

At four we were on the meridian of Green-

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wich and could now begin to count our time to the westward.

We missed Formentera light completely last night, but the night was rather thick and the visibility poor, so we hung on our course for a landfall on the Spanish coast. Cape Palos light appeared northwest by north at 12:30 A. M. about twenty miles off. The run from Majorca had been good and if our luck held Gibraltar was only about two days away.

Tuesday, July 17th —

All morning the Spanish coast was on our starboard beam from seven to ten miles. It blew so hard in the forenoon we took in the jib and although we hated to hobble the ship, it almost seemed advisable to reef the main and mizzen.

Dozens of steamers from the Straits and from the eastward were hugging the coast and we came close to several of them.

All afternoon it blew with increasing strength until it was very close on to gale force. We were just able to carry sail and no more, but we held on to it and the ship was feeling the strain.

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Her usually quiet nature had given place to one of vicious rebellion and she was complaining loudly. Perhaps we were forcing her, possibly it would have been wise to shorten down, and then—it was decided for us, but not in our favor—the wind dropped in two hours from a strong breeze to a flat calm and we were left with the remnants of large seas, pitching uncomfortably.

I don't know what decided the sudden change, except that vague condition that rules these waters, "Mediterraneanism." This looked like another acute attack of it.

Cape de Gata was abeam at six and in the dying light the Sierra Nevada mountains in their snow-covered majesty, frowned down upon us. They were certainly high enough for Aeolus to have inhabited, and if this was true, we rather hoped his cheeks or his bellows, or whatever he had used, had not finished working.

The night was dedicated to an unholy slatting, banging and cursing, and sleep was at a premium.

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Wednesday, July 18th —

Calm all day with a slightly falling glass. The swell has gone down leaving us alone on a sea of glass. No way was made and the day was spent in gaping wonder at the huge Spanish mountains all along the coast. Pico Mulahacen, nearly 12,000 feet, the highest of the Sierras, is a mountain of extraordinary beauty. It is higher than Aetna though not as spectacular, but in its own way equally as impressive. It is more the crest of a range than a single mountain and we stared at it like moronic tourists.

This was the thirteenth day out of Messina and the day we should have arrived in Gibraltar, which still elusively remained over a hundred miles away.

Thursday, July 19th —

Calm all morning with a thick haze obscuring everything. At five in the afternoon we spoke the ketch *Vagabundo* out of Cadiz, bound for Majorca, and after cheery greetings, parted company—one ship bound east, the other, west. At six the glass was down to 30.05 and without warning, Aeolus puffed out his

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cheeks and blew—not from the Sierras, nor the eastward, but from the west, dead ahead.

The night came on black, the wind with increasing force. It seemed wise to stand off the Spanish coast which we did under reduced sail. We reefed the big mainsail doubly, and put on the storm jib. At ten it was blowing a whole gale and taking off the storm jib and mizzen, we ran south under a double-reefed main and fore-staysail.

Large seas came in with a touch of the long swell of the western ocean in them, and the night was a madness of plunging and crashing interminably. It was a case of heaving-to or sailing it out and since the ship's gear was beginning to be shaky, we elected to sail slowly rather than plunge into it and merely stand still.

Friday, July 20th —

Dawn broke cold and wet with the little ship staggering under the impact of huge beam seas. All day it blew and toward nightfall it appeared to increase in strength.

They who go to sea in ships, particularly small ones, know that hidden under the calm

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ordinary beauty of the water is a ruthless temperament, cruel in the extreme at times. They know that the good must be taken with the bad. Perhaps we were paying a dear penance for the fair days of sailing, running down the levanter.

The seas made up, lengthened, and the wind blew harder, playing a bitter tune against the rigging. Harsh discordant strains sounded with fierce undertones, resembling an orchestra of madmen playing a primitive march on wind instruments, each trying to outdo the other.

A gale at sea in a small vessel is a period of abnormal and unnatural conditions. Time ceases in the ordinary sense and movements of the ship and her people are marked in phases instead. Watches give way to watches, sleep is often non-existent, food is taken in snatches, for comfort is a distant memory known in another life. Home with its modern conveniences, is only a faint thought—a dream perhaps that was—for now exists only the driving wind and salt water that cuts red rims about tired eyes, as hard, drawn faces watch with care each line and wire of the standing and running rigging. The life lines are set up and each man

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walking about the deck watches his footing, for a man overboard in this sea, means a man lost. Sentiment and kindness have gone; there are no excuses left for any failure. All hands are cautioned to be careful, not so that each may return to his family, temporarily forgotten, but because we are short-handed, and the ship requires each in her own need. "One hand for yourself—one hand for the ship," is the tenet by which men live, who sail.

At five, just before dusk settled down, we sighted mountains dead ahead—the coast of Morocco—and we tacked ship to get well off a dangerous coast before night came on.

All night it blew like hell until our dirty unwashed faces lost all expression and against the glare of the binnacle light and cabin lamps, we looked like unhappy wraiths living under a suspended sentence of death. No silly grins or laughter were forced to relieve the strain. Only a quiet grimness took charge—wordless except for an occasional guttural mumbling more eloquent than words.

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Saturday, July 21st —

A crash, and then a cry of: "All hands on deck!" There is nothing to strike greater terror in a man's heart than those four words. Forscher was alone at the wheel and Smith and I roused out from the sleepless misery of soaking berths, ran up the companion ladder to be half washed in again by a torrent of rushing water. A shudder seemed to possess the ship. Fighting our way out, there was the deck under water. It looked as if the vessel were in her death throes and that a few moments would see us all fighting for our lives in the sea. She was still upright but weighted down by tons of water, yet almost submerged she fought for her life and ours.

A quick inspection made certain that all ports and hatches were closed, nothing had given way, but still she seemed to stick—and at the wheel I found she would not handle.

She rolled from side to side and each time she rolled, the water rushed across her decks. The cockpit was waist deep to the coaming. For how long would this helpless terror last? When suddenly—a lift—and she gathered way. Broad-

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side to the wind we sailed her and the force of it carried her over on her side. It was a long chance but we took it and gradually she spilled the hampering weight of the seas from her deck, shook, quivered and quickly recovered her buoyancy. Gamely she came up, causing inarticulate prayers of thanks to form on our lips.

On deck and below, everything was a tangled mess and three inches of water showed over the cabin floor. We went to work on the pumps for two long hours. There was no question but that she had strained and was leaking badly.

It appeared to the helmsman that she had been steering badly and had run off before the wind, when a huge sea had broken and pooped her. The deck was swept clean with solid water and he saved his own life by going to cover in the cockpit. A close call it was!

Through the gray day we ran toward the Spanish coast. Our position was lost except for wild estimation, but we were glad to be afloat, breathing fresh air instead of salt water. Our location for the first time mattered naught.

Before noon Pico Mulahacen towered dead

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ahead, so we were not far off our course. By night we were again up on the Spanish coast. Tacked ship at six, heading for Africa again.

Still it blew and the huge seas smashed into us and night brought no sign of relief. This night the darkness was terrible and all hands were walking in their sleep—of which no one had partaken for forty-eight hours. Our bodies cried for it, but our minds made us stay awake to face any further emergency.

Sunday, July 22nd —

The night passed and the dawn (that blessing to mankind) showed the same apparently unending brutal seas all around us. Lord, would it go on forever?

At twelve, noon, an encouraging shift of wind from west to west southwest brought a slight moderation and at two we put on our large jib, the mizzen, and shook out one reef in the main. It was good to crack on sail, and tired as we were we sang and whistled, as the wind eased. At three we shook out the other reef and were carrying whole sail again. The seas were

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still large but moderating, so there was even a vision of a hot meal ahead.

We headed back for Spain. The *Graf Zeppelin*, bound for South America, passed overhead during the afternoon, and was making very slow time of it. They were quite high but we waved to them gaily—perhaps they waved to us. A good ship she is with a fine record!

The wind eased, shifted around to the east, and then died into a flat calm and we slept as we had never slept before. One drowsy man was on watch looking for more trouble, as we mistrusted the sudden relief, and two dead ones were below, too tired to take off their boots and shake the water out and too indifferent to spill the pools of water from their berths. No one cared about these small worries; sleep was most important, immediately and without ceremony.

Also, in that calm of calms, we tasted hot food—coffee I think it was, with jam and biscuits, the first warmth in three days of misery.

Monday, July 23rd —

The blessed calm stayed with us and no one

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cared that we were not sailing. The memory of those three days was too fresh. Through the night it was breathless and during the day, by which time the seas had gone down considerably, we went to work and put out little home in order. She had taken a merciless beating. So had we and we all showed it, ship and people, in unmistakable signs.

Tuesday, July 24th —

Flat calm all day with a rising glass and some vague hints of a coming easterly wind. There is a strong westerly set which pushes us back to the eastward. A school of forty odd sea cows lazily sun themselves on the surface of the water. In a wide circle they lie dozing apparently with outposts set against a surprise attack. We drift near to them, they drift away, always keeping a distance of a hundred yards, but they are not particularly interested in us.

We are off Malaga now—the lights from the town are plainly visible. We have been becalmed for two days idly drifting a few miles off the Spanish coast which is wonderfully green and attractive. Each promontory is dominated by

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ancient-looking watchtowers. I believe they were used as outposts against the attacking Moorish pirates, who made quick, devastating raids on this coast. It is most pleasant to behold with its green pastures and groves of trees. Plains, dotted with farms and small villages, slope up to low mountains, further on to higher plateaus, then again to more mountains, until the high crest of the Sierra Nevada range is reached. It is a comforting picture for sea-tired eyes and sea-weary bodies, but Gibraltar is our next port and only there will we stop.

Wednesday, July 25th —

The glass has risen and the air is changed with a coming easterly, turning foggy and damp under an overcast sky. At 8 A. M. it came from northeast to east and then steadied by noon into a fresh levanter. We made our course at noon west three-quarters south for the middle of the Straits. By night it was as steady and looked as though it would hold. Rain squalls and lightning flashes varied the night—fierce squalls, but ones that drove us on our way.

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Thursday, July 26th —

From daylight until six the breeze held steady and then strengthened. At six I came on watch, glanced at the sea, felt the wind and looked over the ship. Off to star-board in the haze was a heaviness which was not a cloud and a second inspection confirmed the belief in our position and the hopes of twenty-one days. There was the Rock of Gibraltar! Soon patches of sunlight through the clouds shone brightly upon it, showing us the white water catchments, and as we changed our course to northwest we soon came up until it stood out in bold relief against the low background of Spain.

It is good to see something you have struggled for take form. As we had worked, worried and fretted through twenty-one days of light winds, calms, a hard gale, more calms and then a fresh wind, to see this, our hearts bounded, knowing in a short while we would have the hook down and that, temporarily, our cares would be over.

At nine o'clock we rounded Europa Point and coming up under the lee of the Rock, took the pilot aboard. Gibraltar has two anchorages,

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the commercial harbor at the Spanish end of the Rock and the Admiralty harbor, enclosed in breakwaters on the western side. We chose the latter.

As we prepared to go in we ran into trouble. The levanter, hitting the Rock on the eastern side, divided, going around the north and south ends and met on the western side. It was blowing hard at the time and we found the wind coming behind us from the south and also coming from dead ahead. It came in terrific white squalls and blew our jib out to the boltropes. The main, mizzen and forestaysail were also torn by the force of the wind, and we were handling very badly. Fortunately the pilot tug agreed to tow us in, but even he had a hard time getting us inside the jetties. It was blowing a beast of a breeze there, too, and a half hour was taken up in getting us to a mooring in front of the Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club. There we made fast to the earth again—twenty-one days out.

A most courteous boarding officer from H. M. S. *Shamrock*, arrived in naval style in a smart pinnace, immaculately dressed and wear-

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ing a sword. Shortly after extending to us the Admiral's compliments, he offered us any help we might require. Too tired to deal with officialdom at this moment, I asked him what formalities we had to go through with — health, Customs, harbor authorities? There were none, he said, only that we should give them notice when we were leaving. Such courtesy we had not met on this cruise so far, and as he left we all knew that we were among friends. Left to ourselves, we turned in with our clothes on and slept for twenty hours.

IX

SHADOW OF THE ROCK

THE SHADOW OF THE ROCK

IN the cool of the early morning the Rock is lovelier than at any time during the day. It is jet-black when the light of day first comes and a great coolness overhangs everything. Then as the sun comes up the darkness gives way to deep gray, turning into a lighter blue-gray as the houses of the city emerge from the darkness and the street-lights go out. Suddenly, shafts of sunlight shoot over the crest, then floods of warmth, though the town below is still cool and unaffected and remains so till later in the forenoon when the sun finally makes its belated appearance.

All hands were reveling in the pleasant lassitude after the tense days at sea. Each man was sunning himself on deck, sleeping, swimming over the side, doing anything that required the

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least possible effort—not even thinking, but enjoying to the full, this easy relaxation.

The boarding officer had brought to us a card giving us the privilege of the Yacht Club, which we would make our headquarters during our call in this last port of our Mediterranean passage.

We rowed ashore lazily, dressed properly for the first time in three weeks, walked up into the town and into the Cafe Royal where we ordered a huge dinner, at ten in the morning, rather to the amazement of the staff. They served our every wish, however, right down the line to fine old Amontillado wine and cigars. The best way to enjoy food, drink and tobacco is to go short on it for a while and then taste of it again in copious quantities. It smells, tastes and is better, then, than at any other time. We made the most of our opportunity.

Gibraltar is a friendly place and a visitor is met with great courtesy on every side. Getting back to the Yacht Club, we introduced ourselves although it was hardly necessary. Smith and Forscher had been there for nearly a month and consequently we were scarcely strangers.

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Several officers of the regiments on station there were at the Club for their morning bath and spots of whiskey or beer, and soon we were made at home. *Stortebeker's* cruise was the chief topic of conversation. They were all sportsmen who sailed their own boats and the idea appealed to their imaginations.

The afternoon was spent in the same way, in easy fashion, and at night we all went to the cinema—the first in many days—and so, after the fashion of Mr. Pepys, to bed.

The following few days were completely occupied in taking stock of our assets and liabilities. It developed that the balance sheet did not read in our favor. To begin with, the ship had taken a hard beating in the gale. The sirocco had shaken her quite badly and in addition there was the usual strain and wear of the ordinary sailing.

A thorough examination showed that she needed many things. By this time we had no money, and the chances of getting any from the owner were questionable as he had already spent a great deal on her. Briefly, the barest list

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of requirements looked like this: a new mizzen and jib, rope line and marline, turnbuckles, tools, charts of the West Indies, new blocks, and numerous small items, not to mention a complete stock of sea stores for the passage across. Also, the ship needed caulking on the topsides where she had strained and leaked badly in the last few days.

The situation was discouraging. We found that the naval dockyard was the best place to get work done, particularly the sailmaking, so we set about to get price estimates on the work. The whole thing would come to nearly three hundred dollars, allowing us enough spare cash to stop at one of the Atlantic islands on the way home. A wire to New York brought the reply: "Proceed with work." So the order was given to the dockyard to start and cut the sails. They said the pressure of work would not make it possible for them to complete the sails until the end of August so we would have more than a month to wait. It would not be advisable to start across until September because of the hurricane season, so we resigned ourselves to a month or longer stay in Gibraltar.

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This port of call will always remain as one of the most pleasant memories in my life, for in it we were permitted to enter a life which the tourist rarely tastes. We were taken in, entertained and treated as sportsmen by our English cousins. The world of sport—the fraternity of seagoing people—knows neither nationalism nor prejudices.

On Sunday, three days after our arrival, a large Diesel yacht, flying the white ensign, came into the harbor and anchored near to us. I'm afraid we looked at her rather enviously for she embodied all that we lacked in comfort and luxury. It must be fun to cruise in a boat of that type and have others do the work.

Rather embarrassed, we realized that her people were as much interested in us (more from curiosity, no doubt, than envy) as we were in them, and later in the day we were surprised to find them swimming toward us until they reached our side and climbed on board with little ceremony.

They were the Earl of Dudley and his party, from England, bound for the Riviera. A more friendly lot of people it has never been my

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pleasure to meet. They had to see the boat and hear all about the cruise, and several hours later when they left, it was only after we had promised to go abroad and dine with them. They were good fun, gay and friendly—splendid examples of the real English gentlefolk—not the sort one reads about and naturally expects to find.

There were cocktails in the large main lounge of the *Anna Marie*, and later a dinner which did our half-starved bodies no end of good. It takes days for the body to recover from a siege of short rations, and that night we made good progress putting on pounds. It sounds ungrateful to talk of nothing but the food, but I think they understood, and their companionship was most delightful. Back to our ship we went, very late, much impressed with the advantages of cruising de luxe compared to our own meager way of living.

Anna Marie stopped for several days. We saw much of them and it was with real regret that we finally saw them leave Gibraltar to continue their cruise. Later, there was a report that she had run into trouble in a gale. We sin-

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cerely hoped that their worries were inconsequential.

August was occupied in meeting many people and making real friends. Everyone was kind and they were all anxious to see *Stortebeker* and hear her story. We never tired of having our friends aboard and relating the experiences of the past and the plans for the future passage.

Colonel Curling, the secretary of the Yacht Club, became an intimate and an excellent advisor. I am a bit ashamed of the number of times I accepted his and Mrs. Curling's hospitality with nothing I could do in return. They were always most gracious and took me about in their car. Many pleasant evenings were spent in their home high up on the Rock, where after dinner we would sit looking over the harbor with its myriad lights of ships and at the mountains of Spain beyond. It is queer to sit in a chair, smoking, at ease, and think of the sea in retrospect. Time dims the memory of hardships, and friendly talk with understanding companions drives away all the little fears and panics that reach out and threaten to destroy one's purpose. The gales of wind and heartbreaking

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calms remain vaguely as nightmares but the great joy of running down good fair winds under ideal conditions stays fresh and vivid in the mind. Our memories work so conveniently. There is not much room for tears and sadness as we are always optimistically enjoying the present and looking forward to tomorrow. Man could not go to sea unless this were true.

Gibraltar is one of the most unique places in the world. It is cosmopolitan and provincial in the same breath. Sheltered under the western side of the Rock, closely gathered and living in tall houses, is one of the earth's most thickly centered populations. Spaniards dominate, of course, but there is a large Moorish settlement, and between them they sell to the world which arrives in tourist ships, conglomerate masses of everything. Flowers, wines and liquors, tobaccos, laces, pottery—every knickknack the mind can imagine is peddled in the streets and in the shops. As there is only one street running along in the direction that the Rock lies, Gibraltar could be called a city of steps.

Vessels come each day from the world over. Surely this is the crossroads of the world, and

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any morning will see on the main street a thronging mass of people whose visit may be limited to a few hours. All races and creeds are chattering wildly—seeing this famous place in a few short moments.

England owns it and guards it; English-like, her countrymen retire into the background and do not try to change the native character. Except for the garrison troops and English sign-boards, it might be Spain or Morocco. Life is easy and the atmosphere is Colonial. No one appears to hurry.

The Yacht Club is a gathering place, and each morning at bathing time friends convene to pass the time cheerily. Twice a week there are sailing races, for a small one-design class of sharpies and a larger handicap class. Racing is keenly contested and beginning with the Governor General and the Admiral, down through the list, there is good sport to be had.

It was my good fortune to become friendly with Colonel Brinton, who was retired from the Life Guards and made his home a few miles over in Spain. He not only insisted that I race with him in his *Lassie* every race, but he and

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Mrs. Brinton were most kind in entertaining me at their home—a lovely Spanish hacienda back in the hills.

I must say it was something of a relief to get back there in that superb setting—a Spanish home tucked away in an olive grove, far from the world of ships, the talk and the smell of the sea. Here was real quiet, rest and afternoons spent galloping across the Spanish hills on a fine Irish mare. We used to go on picnics in the hills and then have a breathless gallop over rough country up on to the plateau where the world seemed spread at our feet: Spain, Gibraltar, the Straits, and beyond, the African coast with the Atlas mountains backing it in the far distance. On the left we would see the Mediterranean, looking quiet now, and west, the old Atlantic. Looking out there I could see four thousand miles of blue water—beckoning, as it does to all men who would go to sea. There was destiny waiting, a foreshadowing of the end of our venture to be crowned with what—success or failure?

Driving back through the little villages of Spain, back to the Rock and the ship, I often

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wondered if it were possible to connect these two: the comfortable warmth and luxury of the land and the uncertain disturbing thrill of the sea. Men have asked themselves this question for a thousand years and still there is no answer—nor will there ever be.

Days lengthened into weeks and the work went on, of making sails and getting the ship ready. Our mornings were occupied keeping the vessel in shape, sewing canvas, painting, and doing all the necessary jobs which life on a ship demands. The afternoons and evenings were spent on shore and those were good times, filled with dinners, teas, racing in the bay, excursions into Spain that included attending polo games in which a surprisingly good brand of the game was played.

August is the great month for training cruises of various national naval schools. The American Merchant Marine training ship, *Nantucket*, came in looking a picture of the past under her square rig. They sent a smart-looking boat crew over to us with an officer in the stern sheets, sent by the skipper with a welcome invitation to dinner that we accepted almost

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too quickly. We went and dined with their officers in the wardroom and enjoyed a fine evening swapping yarns of the sea. They let us check our chronometer with their own and ours showed it had kept a steady rate. Back to the ship we went—loaded with tobacco, pilot, charts of the North Atlantic, some excellent advice and their best wishes. They make this voyage each year, returning by the northeast trade route, and the skipper strongly recommended going by way of Madiera instead of the Canary Islands. We decided to make use of their suggestions.

They sailed for home in two days and then two smart-looking Coast Guard cutters, the *Seneca* and *Sebago*, came in, under command of Captain Randolph Ridgeley, the head of the Coast Guard academy at New London, and they also gave us a homelike greeting.

Almost every day a new arrival would enter the harbor amid appropriate salutes. The Portuguese training ship, *Sagres*—as fine a sailing ship as I have ever seen, a Spanish ship, Brazilian and Czechoslovakian all made their entries, turning the harbor into a moving pageantry of

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color. Outside, P and O boats, Royal Mail, and big Italian liners from home, or bound for New York, would arrive and discharge their human cargos for the usual few hours of tourism ashore.

Gibraltar is a thrilling place. The world takes it for its own pleasure and a tourist has not really traveled unless he has been here and can speak affectionately and patronizingly of it. But over it all are the emplacements high on the Rock where a stranger may never go, the batteries on the breakwater, patrolled by a sleek grey guardship with steam up ready to go to sea in five minutes. The Union Jack and the white ensign cover all these, colorful reminders that in spite of the gaiety, the apparent freedom and the cosmopolitan air, this rock is a part of England.

Tucked away in a corner of the city is an even more poignant reminder—the Trafalgar cemetery where some of Nelson's men lie. Their ghosts remain there quietly, defenders of the Rock and the Empire. A visitor will be touched by this little overgrown place. It is only a square garden but the headstones bring

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back pictures of Trafalgar—the sieges of the Rock and the terrible fevers that once were a scourge to the population. Over the wall, carts and automobiles go by and children laugh and crowds of tourists pass. Occasionally someone will come in with a few flowers to put on a nearly forgotten grave. And life goes on, but this more than any part of the Rock is forever England.

The work at the dockyard was nearing completion. Commander Merryman, the King's harbormaster, and Admiral Austen were both very anxious to help us in our preparation, and made many valuable suggestions and recommendations. Colonel Curling drove me about in his car to help find various odds and ends which it would be hard for a stranger to discover. The Frasers, the Birons, Pynes and Worcesters all entertained us, making life very enjoyable; in fact, their kindness will never be forgotten.

The American Consulate at Gibraltar is famous in its way for having been in the same family, the Spragues, I think for over a hundred years. They could not do enough for us

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and especially Mr. and Mrs. William Cavanaugh, the Vice Consul and his wife. They had us for dinner, cocktails, and almost every day we saw them in one way or another. Their house was open to us as long as we were there. How lucky the Consulate Service is to have people of this sort.

So the days in Gibraltar went along, merrily, until we felt that we were a part of the place. The policemen saluted us, military guards likewise, and shopkeepers called us by name, until it seemed a shame to have to leave such a charming oasis.

But outside, through the Straits, the Western Ocean beckoned to us provocatively, as only the sea can call, and her song was strongest. The towns have their lures; life and merriment, pretty faces and good things to eat and drink, but to a man who has spent time at sea, they are not enough. He is a fool, perhaps, for he has known suffering and want, and the sea with all her endearments is fickle. The seaman knows this but he is obsessed — as a man who is addicted to liquor or narcotics, he is intrigued with the unknown and enslaved to quick mo-

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ments of exhilaration and thrills that he cannot even hope to capture. Though his life is lived in monotony and uncertainty, the seaman is an idealist at heart. Deep down in it, he is aware that he wants something yet does not know what it is. Hopeful he is, but hopelessly he carries on, knowing no other ideal but this which can never be explained; always paying tribute in mind and body to the sea.

She is his mistress but her wiles are not feminine. They are cruel and hard and she rules him by superstition and fear, picking him up and throwing him down, finally casting him to one side. And even then he may ask the reason but he will never know why.

X

OUTWARD BOUND

OUTWARD BOUND

NEARLY everyone in Gibraltar knew we were looking for a cook. The gastronomic art had been neglected on *Stortebeker*, due to the necessity of actually keeping the ship going, and our innards craved assurance of kinder treatment in the future. Word sped about the Rock, even into the foothills of Spain, and a horde of cooks descended upon the ship. Most of them proved to be "would-be's," solely interested in getting to the States by fair means or foul.

The American Consulate was apprised of our need and Bill Cavanaugh went to great pains to get us the right man. Every Consulate is plagued with unfortunates looking for free meals, clothes or a passage home — anything to make the life of the staff a nightmare.

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Some beauties came aboard, Spanish-Americans, Italian-Americans, Portugee-Americans, and one prize beauty, an Hawaiian-Spanish-American. All were able, willing, honest, and could do anything until investigation showed otherwise. One had rather an unenviable police record; another, swollen feet; and not a man-Jack could cook hot water, so we sent them all ashore deciding that at least we must have a congenial companion for the remaining more than four thousand miles. This was decided because of the attitude of the Hawaiian chap, Vincent Linares Lopez. He came aboard modestly, the very soul of abject honesty and deserving ambition. He was a big bruiser, built like a heavyweight fighter, but utterly modest and retiring. Vincent Linares Lopez did very well until — until he was told to bunk in the forecastle. Whereupon his face turned a livid red and he asked if I thought he was a servant. His manner became too belligerent for a pathetic national trying to get back to his native hearth. Attempting to make his departure brief and happy for both parties, I sat at the cabin table while he glowered darkly over me, and

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told him kindly but firmly that besides his not being a cook, he would never fit into our little band of adventurers for two months of seagoing isolation. Ashore he went — as they all had — raining threats and imprecations upon the ship and her company.

It was a bit of a relief to hear his voice die off in the distance.

Cavanaugh said there was one more possibility. He had heard of an American negro in La Linea, across the Spanish boundary, who was looking for a ship homeward bound. He knew nothing of him except that he was as black as a coal. This sounded good so we decided to look for him.

Driving to La Linea, inquiries showed that there was such a person but he had gone inland two days past, walking. Now Spain is a fairly large country. There must be several million people living in it, so the odds looked large against our finding this latest prodigy. A half a day had been consumed, meanwhile, not to mention a few bottles of beer as the day was warm and we were becoming fired with the thrill of the chase. We drove from La Linea

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due north inquiring at each roadside tavern and farm, and the answers justified our carrying on. Surely he couldn't walk far in two days!

The scent became warmer and for ten miles we followed a hot line until at a crossroads, we were checked. One road said Cadiz, another Malaga and the third I forget where. But we tossed a coin and Malaga won.

On we went, eastward now with each peasant a source of tangled information. Yes, they had all seen a black American, and ah, a new clue, he wore a white cap; but his movements were vaguely reported. Some saw him going one way; some, another, but all agreed they had seen him, so he surely must be in the offing.

A Spanish policeman with a loaded rifle hopped abroad, thrilled to spin along the fine roads with us. Perhaps the rifle was to help us wing our black quarry if he tried to escape.

Now the madness of the chase had entered our blood and we were set to capture or kill. By dusk, he was reported a half hour's march ahead of us and we frantically dashed on, fearful of losing our hard-fought prey in the darkness. Just at dark, the lookout reported a white cap

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ahead and we ran up to it and very nearly over it. He was black, the blackest we had ever seen, cockily crowned in a perfect antonym of a cap. We had run him to earth after a sixty-mile chase!

The conversation that followed disclosed a great deal, laconic as it was:

"Where are you from?"

"Baltimore, sir."

"What are you doing here?"

"Lost my ship, sir!"

"What were you on the ship?"

"Second cook, sir." (what perfect bliss!)

"Do you want to go to sea?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Hop in!"

And that was all.

So we found our cook, and he turned out to be a real one and a good little man. James Morrison was added to our company without any questions asked except his nationality, though it was obvious. He had no papers, but telegrams to the States verified his statements and he was signed on to cook and look after the ship, at nothing a day and keep. Of clothes he had none,

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of money, even less, and though the poor little devil was half starved, his face wore a continual smile which was a revelation. Now we were four, and a little better equipped for the last lap of the homeward passage.

A sailing vessel needs a good easterly to get westward from Gibraltar because of the strong easterly set through the Straits, so we planned to be ready when the first east wind blew. On August twenty-seventh, the sails were delivered from the dockyard and bent on—that is, the new mizzen was. The old mainsail we had had patched, and were going to carry until it blew out so as to save the new one.

By September first we were ready for sea. All replacements of sails, rigging and gear had been made. The ship had been cleaned, caulked, and painted; and all sea stores, plus water, were aboard. We sat down to wait for the fair wind, unhappily remembering age-old yarns of sailing ships trapped in Gibraltar because of continual westerlies. The dockyard was considerate in sending us daily reports of the wind and weather outside.

It had been blowing westerly for a week al-

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ready and looked like setting into a steady siege. Gibraltar had been kind to us and each succeeding day was an added pull against leaving our many friends.

But home was pulling us harder and the pleasant inactivity had palled. A strong desire to get to sea once more had taken charge of us all.

Tuesday, September fourth, was a fair day. The wind was very light westerly early in the morning. It calmed a bit, died, and then at ten the first puff of a levanter came over the Rock at ten—the forerunner of a strong easterly. We had felt lazy for over a month but the first touch of a fair wind was all that was needed to bring us to life.

Supplies were all aboard, water in the tanks, everything had been ready for days. Now, the waiting was done and we were going to sea. It is a good feeling. A man may live in many different ways and conditions but there is no better one than this.

One o'clock was set for sailing time. Ned Smith and Dick went ashore to get our clearance and a few odds and ends. The cook and I

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hoisted the mizzen, and sent the ensign up to the peak, thus declaring our intentions. A report came from the dockyard that it was a fresh breeze outside in the Straits and recommended our going, to get the full advantage of it.

Our best friends came abroad and wished us luck. There is always sadness mixed in with the joy when a vessel puts to sea and we felt it then. At twelve, Bill and Ting Cavanaugh came aboard with the crew, took photos, said good-byes all around and then were put ashore.

Since our motor was not running, we needed a pull out of the harbor and into the bay. The dockyard had been good enough to consent to lend us a tug, and now we waited for it to come. These last moments were trying—they never seemed to end. At one o'clock she came with a pilot aboard. Our mainsail was hoisted, the anchor chain shortened, a line was sent over to the tug and the hook brought up and catted.

A crowd had collected in front of the Yacht Club and as we gathered way, Colonel Curling wished us luck from all the members of the Club, through a megaphone. They dipped their colors to us and we replied. Gaining way, *Stor-*

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tebeker moved through the harbor toward the breakwater. The Admiralty tower ran up the good-luck signal code flags, and as we passed through the jetties, there was the green flag. When a ship is entering the Admiralty harbor a red flag is flown—on leaving, a green one, and all ships must stand to. It is a signal used only for naval vessels and large ships, and here they had flown the Stand-to flag for us. It made us all feel lumpy and queer in the throat.

Outside, the *Revenge*, a huge warship, dipped the white ensign to us and we replied. The tug cast off from us, waved good luck, the jib and forestaysail were set. We were free, sailing once more. The wind was light, easterly though, and our course was made, for Carnero Point, the southwestern end of Gibraltar Bay.

Through the afternoon we sailed slowly, holding close to the Spanish shore to make the most of the west-going counter-current. The Spanish hills glistened in the sunlight; the African coast only ten miles distant was mysterious in the afternoon light. Behind it the Atlas Mountains appeared to be huge vanguards of

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the immensity of the dark continent. There we were, with Gibraltar to the north and Apes Hill to the south, the Pillars of Hercules dividing the Eastern World from the Western Ocean. Behind us was nearly two thousand miles of sailing — good and bad — and that much experience — all good. Ahead was what? None of us knew, for none had ever sailed the trade wind route. All we knew was this; there lay more than four thousand miles of blue water.

We were going home by way of the Southern Route for several reasons. First, because of the northeast trade winds which blow below latitude 30° north. Then, the lateness of the year made it safe this way, from gales which might be encountered in a Northern Passage, and hurricanes on the Southern Route, which would presumably be over by October fifteenth. We were a small ship—even at that, short-handed—and slow. The Southern Route held out the strongest hopes of a fair weather passage. Our orders read for Florida, which was in the line of sailing.

A month had been spent studying the pilot charts and this was the conclusion that was

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reached. Madeira would be the first and only port, then to the southwest to catch the true northeast trades down to around twenty-five degrees north latitude; then straight across to home.

XI

THE WESTERN OCEAN

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NIGHT descended over the Straits with the deliberation of a slowly closing door, and the gloom spread over the edges of two continents and the narrow body of water separating them. Momentarily, the world was hushed into a somber quietude.

Driving before the freshening easterly, the ship gathered increasing speed as the darkness shut out all signs of the land excepting the occasional guiding flashes of the lighthouses. Countless lights of ships on all sides, Atlantic and Mediterranean bound, made caution a necessity and a lookout was stationed in the eyes to warn the helmsman when they stood too close. The levanter increased in force; the sea made up into a chop and the fair current along the coast drove us at a staggering pace. By cross-bearings from Cape Carnero to Tarifa and then

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across to Tangier we were sailing at nine knots, more than she had ever done, but the current was helping her to the extent of several extra knots.

The sea was raging about us. The rips, whirls and eddies were hidden from the sight, but they were felt by sudden shocks and tearings at the helm. Steering was hard. The wind grew in strength, funneling through the Straits in a true westerly direction. It was a clear night, with myriad stars multiplying rapidly, and our little ship plowing her way toward the African coast on her way home.

Then a sudden change came. A first long swell rolled in from the old Atlantic, and it felt like home. It picked *Stortebeker* up, embracing her as a lover would. All felt it and all hands knew its meaning. It had come—the Western Ocean. Clear of the Straits this feeling arose. More than four thousand miles with only one small island lay between us and our own Western World. A large deep body of water to be covered, challenging him who would sail its vastness. The gauntlet was flung in our faces,

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and picking it up we held on our course steady to the southwestward.

The Mediterranean is a lovely painted lady, falsely colored, gay, conceited, but charming with it all. Always present there was that feeling of deceit and consequent distrust. She is an inconstant lady. Her step is short and mincing and her mood is always on the change. From Turkey to Gibraltar is a good long distance—about two thousand miles. The distances across from Europe to Africa are varying. It is a real sea, as vicious, hard and cruel as any other, but it is difficult to forget that there is land all about, although it isn't visible. A constant feeling of the land's proximity makes the seaman feel that he is on a large inland waterway, so even its dangers are minimized.

Increasing, the swells came rolling in from the westward, heralding this new-found love of ours. The feeling of change is good, from short chops to long surging swells, from fancy pale water to a deeper, truer blue, and the transition cheers us on.

Spain was only a memory now and Africa

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with Tangier on the port hand was passing quickly. At midnight, cross-bearings with Cape Trafalgar and Cape Spartel gave us a position; departure was taken, and the course laid for Madeira, southwest by west, six hundred miles.

Wednesday, September 5th —

Morning found us alone on the sea. Africa, our last connecting link with the Eastern Hemisphere, had died off over the rim of the sea, and this new phase began, marching over the rounded surface of the Western Ocean. The sea was noticeably different in color and in form.

We were standing off shore to get the full advantage of the Portuguese northerly which runs down between Madeira and the African coast eventually to blend into the northeast trades. The easterly had died and the wind came northerly but with very little force. At noon what wind we had, left us, and a thick fog shut in. After months of Mediterranean sunlight dazzling our sight, the fog was a bit like home. It cleared in the afternoon and the northerly freshened slightly, then steadied.

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All hands were light-hearted. There is always a new thrill upon going to sea once more. The excitement, the little natural fears, fears born of the mystery of things unknown, and the tremendous pleasure of accomplishment, all are part and parcel of the beginning of a new passage. Each hour was a small run, each watch a combination of several hours, and midnight finally the end of a page in the log, full of work done, miles run down towards our ultimate end. The artist signs his finished work, the writer his own, and all men who complete their personal creation are proud to sign themselves finally. The sailor most curiously of all, but still as proudly, writes his name in water. It is his medium which has never taken static form, but every man who has gone to sea has written his part in the sea world's history in large bold letters. A moment only each is allowed and then the work passes on into oblivious memory.

Thursday, September 6th —

An uneventful day, with a smooth sea and light variable winds hauling from south to west northwest. Very heavy dew as night came on.

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Friday, September 7th —

The wind hauled during the night to a northerly direction, steadied, and held. We are now in the Portuguese northerly, or Portuguese trades. It is beautiful sailing with the wind just abaft the beam, our best point of sailing. The little ship is comfortable, our gear in good shape, the ship's company happy, and even the two cats (erstwhile inhabitants of a Gibraltar gutter), Bacchus, aged about six months, and Stinker, whose eyes were opened on the boat, are beginning to like it. Bacchus does not look as if he would like the sea, and little Stinker does not seem to care one way or the other. As we stand further south the weather is getting a bit warmer, the nights are noticeably so. There is a dryness in the atmosphere which is a marked and welcome change from the heavy humidity of the Mediterranean.

Saturday, September 8th —

The trade wind is holding steady and the sea is quite smooth. This sort of sailing is the kind which yachtsmen dream about, a steady fair wind and an easy one. Someone once said that

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a man had not really sailed until he had run down the trade winds. If our luck so far has been a true sample it would not seem to be an over-statement. The beautiful regularity of keeping a good average speed for days on end in comfort is certainly the sailor man's dream fulfilled.

At night the stars are very near, lighting our little world brilliantly, intimately. There is a comforting warmth about the life in the trades which puts thoughts of the land with its dust and heat very far astern.

At ten-thirty in the evening a steamer crossed our bow very close, too close for comfort. In fact, we had to run off to clear her stern or she would have cut us down. There was something strange about this ship since she was not properly lighted and was headed from a very barren part of the coast of Morocco. Probably a gun-runner or smuggler of some sort. She was scarcely polite and it was not much fun to have a large ship bear down on you far off shore, without the slightest change of course or speed.

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Sunday, September 9th —

The trade wind has hauled to easterly and settled there. A long swell is making up from that quarter and the wind is freshening. We took the forestaysail off at ten-fifteen in the morning as the wind is well aft now and the sail is not drawing. We are still moving easily but not with the ideal conditions of the last two days.

Sighted a ship at eight-thirty in the evening, northwest three miles. She was paralleling our own course, evidently headed for Madeira or the Canary Islands.

Monday, September 10th —

The wind is east by south and fitful, with the sky overcast all morning, and occasional light rain squalls. At five in the morning a steamer crossed our stern a quarter of a mile distant, headed north. Continued gloomy weather all day. Fortunately the sun came clear for a brief moment just at noon, giving us a good sight for latitude. The wind died in the afternoon and left us rolling in a confused sea. During the day we took off the mizzen and later put it on

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again. Also set the forestaysail. Overcast all night, with rain occasionally and no wind to speak of.

Tuesday, September 11th —

Today we are one week out of Gibraltar and with luck we should make our landfall early tonight. No wind early in the day but later we drew a slant from the south. It cleared sufficiently to get a good noon latitude. Our position at two-thirty put us at $33^{\circ} 07' N.$ latitude, and $15^{\circ} 38' W.$ longitude, approximately forty miles east of Porto Santo, the nearest of the Madeira group. Exactly twenty-five minutes later, at two-fifty-five in the afternoon, we sighted the island dead ahead on our course, bearing west one quarter south about thirty-nine miles away. Everything checked very nicely and it was gratifying to see land and know that the week's calculations were entirely accurate. This was my first landfall off shore.

The visibility was very good. Heavy banks of clouds were ahead, no doubt covering the whole island group. A beautiful sunset closed the book of a very happy day. Sighting land is

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always a thrilling moment aboard any ship, but on a small ship, with a tiny crew and an amateur navigator, such a moment reaches huge proportions.

The wind died in the evening and darkness found us about thirty miles from Porto Santo.

Wednesday, September 12th —

Sighted the Porto Santo light at twelve-thirty-five in the morning, which put us about twenty-seven miles away. Flat calm in the early morning, but we caught a light northerly later. The day broke clear and at ten we came abeam of the lighthouse six miles away.

There is a fascination about an island, particularly to the island-born, and being such, a queer feeling always comes to my throat when these little lumps of land rise up and make their bow to the incoming ship. They are independent and in their little detached way, carry an air of drama. Meeting them from the sea is like accosting a towering individual on the street, who rises above the crowd. The mountain folk can have their grand huge masses. For sheer fascination give me these little hills of the sea.

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Porto Santo to starboard, Dezerta Grande to port, Madeira dead ahead, all covered with cloud banks and looking brilliant in the late afternoon sun.

The wind died at nightfall. Fora Island Light at the eastern end of Madeira appeared at seven o'clock, twenty miles away.

Thursday, September 13th —

We spent the whole day lying becalmed off Madeira. It was not unpleasant. From dawn until dark the combination of land and sea in the constantly changing light and coloring of the day was an amazing spectacle. Madeira and the surrounding islands of Porto Santo, Dezerta Grande, and Bugio, are very colorful. In the first light of dawn they showed in a purple haze caused by the blending of the reddish earth and the purple and blue growths of vegetation. The houses are white with red roofs. As the sun appeared, the islands were vivid streaks of light and dark shadows, in the fields, in the valleys, and from the huge cliffs of the coast up to the high mountains dominating the whole scheme.

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Madeira is sixty-five-hundred feet high in the middle, and the whole island makes up toward this crest. Through the afternoon we idled along the coast with light airs from the sea. Now the houses and little towns were in plain view.

Stortebeker is shipshape now, ready to go into port, looking her very best.

We lay to off Funchal all night, forestaysail backed, waiting for the dawn, to stand in and make our entrance.

Friday, September 14th —

Becalmed most of the morning, but at eleven a light southwest wind carried us into the open roadstead of Funchal. Dropped the anchor at twelve, noon, in a berth assigned to us by the harbor pilot about one hundred yards off the beach of the town.

We were anchored to the earth again ten days out of Gibraltar, after a most pleasant but slow, uneventful passage.

The anchorage was filled with cruise ships, freighters, and the ever-present crowd of bum-boats and natives selling their wares. The island

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looked good but still it seemed a shame to break an easy passage, even a slow one, by coming into port when there was no real need. Our principal concern was the weather. This was not yet the middle of September. In theory, the hurricane season in the West Indies would be at its height from now until the middle of October. Since the hurricanes travel far out to sea it would seem wise to spend some time in Madeira and give them a wide margin for safety.

With this thought in our minds, and the pleasant prospect of a week of utter relaxation for all hands, we arrived in Madeira, the Pearl of the Atlantic.

XII

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FRANQUE YOSEF, the pilot, was our one-man committee of welcome to Funchal. Through his kind offices the port doctor was fetched, and after the usual perfunctory questions and answers, we were permitted to land.

Now Madeira is the tourists' paradise and it is not intended that this should smack in any way of a guidebook, but coming in from the sea as we had, there were impressions—different ones no doubt from those of the traveller stepping off from the luxury of the cruise ship. In each port, I imagine, it was the same. We were no different from our fellow-humans on the big ships, only the circumstances and the way of our coming gave us a slightly different feeling. They arrive, pleasure-bent, secure, in a spending mood, and unfortunately for them,

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are rushed until the ship's whistle calls them back to the fold and carries them on to the next port.

Our entry was less ostentatious, since we were unexpected, had no ship's band and were very close to being broke. Franque Yosef, good fellow that he was, understood that and warned away his commercially minded countrymen.

We told him and he understood, being a seaman, that our wishes were slight. All we wanted was some fresh food, the chance to send a cable and post letters, and perhaps a glass or two of the island wine.

The island Portuguese are a courteous people and cosmopolitan in the sense that the world comes to them, to see, buy their laces and wines, and leave impressed with the dignified quiet of their island. It is an Old World spot, complacently settled in the Southern Ocean, used as a tonic by the invalid, and for a thrill by the curious. Perhaps it would set us right in body and spirit for the long trek which lay to the westward.

Funchal is an attractive little city, built about

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the half circle of its bay. Cobbled streets, smooth and worn, lie sloping at first, then steeply as the town begins to climb the mountains behind. It is a laughing town, gay with color, flowers and music, sidewalk cafés and entrancing shops.

The news of our coming seemed to have spread, for we were conscious of the curious glances of the people on shore. The business of entering the port was concluded with the harbor master, who was the soul of courtesy and solicitude. Going alone up into the town I came upon a little English church hidden from the street, surrounded by gardens and palms. There, in the deep grass behind the chancel I lay down, more tired than I knew, and slept till dark.

These were happy days in Funchal. Our purpose was to do exactly nothing. There was a long stretch ahead and it seemed wise for each man to forget the ship, the sea and all connected with it—if it is possible to do this in an island town.

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To stay in Madeira is to turn back the pages of time. It is hard to describe a flower or a pearl. Perhaps it would help in this case to say that one might expect a landing party of pigtailed ruffians to come ashore at any moment and sack the town. Take the scent of tropical flowers, and wine, the tinkling music of banjos and soft voices, the warm languor of the South; throw in for spice the salt wind of the sea and—you have Madeira.

Back in the hills are primitive little towns. We went up to Canicio for a religious *fiesta*. After spending a short time in the church first, following the custom, we wandered through the lanes of booths, the wine and pastry shops, where there was everything one would care to spend an *escudo* on. It was good fun mixing with these folk. The island Portuguese are a race unto themselves.

We made friends ashore with the British Consul who cordially entertained us. It was the time of the American Cup Race and we drank *Endeavor's* health many times. I think all sporting men hoped she would win but it was not in

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the cards. The parson of the English church had us to tea with the chaplain of the Royal Yacht Squadron and of course the talk was all of *Endeavor's* chances.

It was my pleasant fortune to meet Major and Mrs. Guy Paget (quite by chance) who asked me to lunch with them. Their cottage was situated on the edge of a high cliff, looking down at the breaking line of the surf below.

This was the beginning of a delightful but all too short acquaintance. Afternoons were spent in a summerhouse on the crest of the cliff looking out to sea, watching its ceaseless motion, the incoming and outgoing ships and musing about it all. The *Abraham Rydberg*, in ballast, bound for the Australian grain trade, came in one afternoon, ghostlike, drifting through the light airs with every rag of canvas set. She appeared suddenly through a bank of mist, a tall ship, like an apparition from the past. One of the few left of a dying race, she came at a time when we were speaking of the sea and sea changes. Brilliantly did she paint to us a picture of the beauty that is almost gone. The Pagets were charming,

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as were Mr. and Miss Miles with whom they were staying.

Alfonso Coelho was the next person we met, and he like the *Rydberg* was of a different age. This man spoke of the sea without opening his mouth—a rarity now, but not so rare in the days of sail. Big, boisterous and tough he was, yet gentle, and a man such as you seldom see any more. Coelho was good to us, took us to his home, and gave us books and magazines to read. He cleverly advised us in all our necessary dealings on shore. One might say that he was the first seagoing citizen of Madeira, although his was a breed that owes allegiance only to the sea and his citizenship was but a perfunctory duty to nationalism.

On September twentieth, at around noon, a small double-ended cutter, looking very seaworn, came into the roadstead and lay very near to us. We rowed over to her and a slight little figure of a man called to us in a strange tongue, and beckoned an invitation to come aboard. We came alongside, hopped aboard and found a queer condition of things. She was only

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thirty-three feet long and her owner was sailing single-handed from Finland to Australia to settle there. He had just come in from fifty-six days at sea, alone, (and a hard passage it was too, north of the British Isles). The vessel was pathetically small, he had only one general chart of the North Atlantic, a pocket watch for chronometer, and a rickety old sextant. All his supplies and equipment were scanty, as one could see, and he looked very tired. However, he told us with the aid of a translating dictionary that as he was in a great hurry to move down to the Cape Verde Islands, he could only stay in for the night, after securing some necessary supplies.

His name was Albert Kaaria; his ship, the *Viborg*. We took him back to *Stortebeker*, which seemed palatial in comparison, gave him a dinner of fresh vegetables, gave him some charts, provisions, etc., and then took him ashore to help him enter his ship and buy a few needed supplies. Coelho was a great help to him.

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SHIPPING NOTE: The Finnish cutter, *Viborg*, Albert Kaaria, master, cleared from Funchal Madeira at 8 A. M. September twenty-first, bound for the Cape Verde Islands and Australia.

After that, the master and crew of the American ketch, *Stortebeker*, began to feel that their homeward passage was, by comparison, a very small venture.

So the days wore on in this pleasant port of call; and as they went we all became restive. Agreeable though the island was, and friendly though the people were, we had an ocean to sail across and a ship to deliver. We had, besides, our own country and homes beckoning in the distance.

When the loneliness for such things begins to gnaw at your heart, there is only one answer—to put the delight of the pleasant foreign lands out of your mind and think only of the return to be made.

Perhaps it is easy to stay when it is so simple to leave, for a few days in a steamship will take you back to your own land, but when it is a long hard struggle to get home, it is difficult to

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make the break and go. There is but one way to do it in such a case, and that is—quickly.

On the afternoon of the twenty-first of September, we decided to sail the following morning. During the afternoon all the extra supplies and water stores were brought aboard and stowed, including some very useful gifts of food and drink from our friends on shore. The Miles and the Pagets were thoughtful, filling our water tanks from their own boat and bringing sacks of potatoes and other useful commodities. Coelho brought fruit, books and a much-needed November pilot chart for us. Their kindnesses were embarrassing to us who had nothing to give.

We went ashore that night to enjoy our last taste of social life. No one wanted to talk, for talk would only trouble the mind, so we mingled with a gay crowd. For hours, until quite late, we laughed at everything, danced and drank fine Madeira wine. The music seemed particularly lovely that night, as we watched the natives dancing in their swirling skirts, clicking castanets. No one enjoyed these things

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as much as we did who had such a short time to spare.

Tonight we enjoyed the wine, the music, the color and the beauty of the land. To-morrow, we would drink deep of another cup, hear harder music, and see a more varied pageantry of color.

We shared a secret with only a few people present. No one else knew we were going to sea the next morning. It was a secret joy, a thrilling purpose in life, and though we were there in reality, we fancied it only as a dream. Here was a life sought by everyone at times, and continually by some, yet it was nothing to us compared to the romance of sailing once more. Like a small spark kindled into a little flame, then into a blaze, is the force that sweeps a man's entire personality back to the sea, once it has taken hold of him.

The first streaks of day told a few of us that the night had died pleasantly. The earth is your own at dawn if you will take it. The spreading march of light was illuminating the island as we walked down through the deserted streets to

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shops, conflicting with that of the flowers, and the clean smell of dawn. It was a fragrant hour—the only one in the day.

Only a few fishermen, making their boats ready for the day's work, were on the seafront. There was no wind, nor sea, and the quiet row back to our vessel became something of a ceremony. The sun was rising now, and the hushed island was awakening, giving birth to the noises and movements of its people. As the sun came up, we lay down and slept.

James Morrisson woke us at eight and gave us a good breakfast. Two hours of sleep had taken the edge from our thoughts and we were eager to move out into our sea world. Ned and Dick went ashore to clear the ship, in my place, and purchase a few of the little items which always pop up at the last moment. Morrisson and I cleaned the ship on deck and below, rigged the lifelines, then hoisted the mizzen and sent the ensign to the mizzen peak so our purpose of going to sea was manifest. There was no wind as yet (there never is in Madeira until ten), so we set twelve o'clock as the hour of

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sailing. Morrisson sent me aloft in the bosun's chair to inspect all the rigging. It was in seagoing shape. Then we hoisted the mainsail and forestaysail and hauled out the clews hard on the booms. The anchor chain was next and we shortened it until it was nearly up and down. There was as yet no wind and the sea was like a huge mirror.

The shore party came aboard at eleven, laden with many things. The dory was hoisted aboard, turned over on the cabin house amidships and lashed. We were ready but still there was no wind.

At twelve, as though predestined, the overhanging clouds on the mountains began to move inland. Far out on the sea a dark streak began to move shore-ward, and soon we felt the first breath of air, high in the rigging. It drifted in slowly and came down lower. The sails began to shake gently and then the streaks of wind on the water settled into a mass covering it all as far as we could see. Our wind had come — a light westerly. The anchor was brought up clear, on deck, and secured. Once

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more we were under way. Gradually gathering way, *Stortebeker* filled her sails and walked in her easy fashion out of the roadstead.

There was a crowd on the jetty, watching our departure, and they gave us a great cheer for which we dipped our colors in reply. Past the sterns of several cruise ships, lined to the rails with curious passengers who waved friendly farewells, we stood seaward. A small boat came alongside, and it was our friend, Coelho, with an armful of papers and magazines which he had brought to us from the latest English ship. A strong handshake from him all around, a cheery "Good luck", and he cast off.

We were on our own once more with the sea, the wind, the sun and the rain for our kingdom. We were back in a man's world, a world of work and endeavor, of hardship and bitter struggle, and yet sometimes, one of great peace that can be found only at sea. It was ours for the mere taking and as some nameless sage once said: "Who would not sell a farm and go to sea?"

XIII

HOMEWARD BOUND

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HOMeward BOUND

Tuesday, September 25th —

Several miles off shore the wind came easterly. Once clear of the island's influence, it freshened and settled steadily. The course was made W x S $\frac{3}{4}$ S, and at last we were bound for home. The sea off Funchal was quite steep at first, due to a strong tide rip setting to the eastward against the wind.

The trade winds come from the northerly past Madeira and turn to the eastward, approximately, when the latitude of 30° N is reached. The trades follow the sun in its course, going north in the summer and south in the winter. So our course was made in a diagonal direction across, for the position of 25° N latitude, and 28° W longitude. We were cleared and bound for Jacksonville, Florida.

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The afternoon was bright and fair. All hands were busy in securing everything, overhauling all the running gear and making everything shipshape. After this, Ned and Dick insisted on having their hair cut off to the scalp. They did the jobs on one another while I took photos of the carnage that was done.

Madeira dropped away off the starboard quarter, a dim mass of land—a secluded quiet spot on the sea's face. As it faded in the deepening light of the soft evening, our thoughts of the Old World gave place to the work ahead, and then to our own country as the ultimate reward of our efforts.

Sea change is a quick variation of circumstance, a rapid turnabout of thought and action. For at sea, the past is an impractical, useless thing, but the future is forever imminent. There is never land astern. That is gone. The shores ahead are what really matter.

All night the vessel eased along under an unsteady easterly and a waning moon. The sea was short and *Stortebeker* slatted badly at times as the wind dropped during the night.

HOMeward BOUND

Wednesday, September 26th —

During the early morning the disorderly masses of clouds rearranged themselves into methodical marching formation as soldiers would, on parade. The good northeast trade wind was top sergeant, ordering the long columns into shape and whipping up the speed of the march. Also, the wind steadied as the cadence of the columns settled into good order.

Moving at five knots, *Stortebeker* has entered into the rhythm of the march, keeping her own time hour after hour with never a missed beat.

In the morning we discovered a small fish, banded black and silver, swimming several feet ahead of the bow. It was a pilot fish, who had come to escort us on our way. The cook immediately gave him the name of Columbus, which seemed a large appendage for such a small ocean traveler. He stayed there all day, keeping his distance but always headed on the ship's course.

It was a pretty sight, as the day wore on, watching the bow wave curling from pure

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green water upward to a smashing of mottled froth and bubbles. As the drops shot upward they were tinted with all the colors of the rainbow, but soon the bow wave would become a drifting white curl on either side and ahead. In the vanguard of it all, our work and purpose, this serenely calm creature was moving, with the ease and economy of motion characteristic of the sea-being.

At intervals he would shoot off swiftly—now to starboard, then to port—to reconnoitre, and return as suddenly again, reëstablishing his position. We were being ably led, and out of the far-reaching depths of the sea and of human emotion we took this fish as a guide, a guard and a good omen.

The day closed uneventfully with a quiet setting of the sun.

Thursday, September 27th —

Soft trade winds all day—not much of them—and as a consequence we are only doing about four knots. However, it is in the right direction so we have no complaint to make to that wind blowing god whose favor is so fickle.

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The further south we get the more beautiful are the days and the nights. This is the summation of living—to exist in a world of widely diverse color, unevenly splashed over the ceiling of our half sphere and on the floor of it through which we tread our way. The hours of these constantly changing sea pictures impressing themselves on the mind, leave indelible memories. Blue become the days, the sky, the sea, and the nights deeper hued with brighter lights overhead, marking the passage of time. This is a picture always striking to the heart of the man on watch, making his consciousness a part of it all; bending him in unison until the human thing, and the thing humans made, upon which he sails, become lost in the elemental.

Friday, September 28th —

A calm uneventful day. It is getting warmer as we stand further south.

Stinker, the youngest member of the ship's company (who is growing into her cat strength) appeared to have a fit today. But a quick dousing in a bucket of sea water calmed her mind, if it did ruffle her temper and temporarily destroy her sleek feline dignity.

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It was only seasickness or overeating. Quickly purged, she returned to her own simple state as ship's youngest cat.

Saturday, September 29th —

Days and nights of increasing tropical languor have acted as sedatives upon the crew. Life offshore soon settles into a precise routine. At first it is thrilling as the excitement of the venture takes charge, then the keen edge is dulled from using and the sharpness wears off, as necessity breeds the commonplace duties.

Watches are set. Each man is given special work to do and the days go on almost with a monotonous regularity.

We really had two days of reckoning in each twenty-four hours of the ship calendar. One, a purely technical one for navigation purposes ran from noon to noon by which the ship's progress was recorded. This was governed by the chronometer and was considered independently of the ship time.

The other, by which we worked and lived, ran from eight one morning until eight in the next. The watches began at eight, with one

HOMeward BOUND

man at the wheel for a two hours' trick with a spell until noon. Then Dick and Ned stood the wheel until six during which time I took sights, worked the daily positions, inspected the whole vessel and did odd jobs. From six to eight the dog watch was mine, and then at eight the night watches began two on, four off, until eight on the following morning.

James Morrisson began his day at five, served the meals at eight, twelve and six and had all night in. This schedule was for fair weather. For foul weather I was on call at any hour of the day or night and when there was heavy work to be done, it was all hands on deck.

Thus went our working days off shore.

Sunday, September 30th —

Sunday is only another day at sea in a small vessel. Large ones give as many as possible of the crew a holiday to sew, read or write letters. We were too short-handed for that. However, there was some very sincere prayer book reading among us and also a bit of raucous singing of seagoing hymns, one of which we all remembered from childhood. It had an appro-

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priate verse that ended, "guard the sailors tossing on the deep blue sea." We weren't tossing much as yet, but the sea was deeper and bluer than ever, so it seemed wise to make our peace beforehand, even if violently off key, singing to the Big Man up there who has charge of these matters.

It was good fun, though, and it is a fair guess that much of the religious humor and blasphemy at sea has behind it a sincere background of—well, let us say, faith, which is concealed beneath good-natured scoffing.

Flying fish appeared today as a guarantee that we are in the tropics. Clever, brilliant creatures they are, moving up and down the rise and fall of the seas, keeping quite close but never touching the water, flashing like large silver bullets in the sun, their wings lashing almost imperceptibly. Up over the crests, down deep into the troughs, then a sudden stab into the water and they are gone out of our ken. Sometimes they come singly, or in twos or threes, yet again as if they were a huge covey of partridges started by an over-anxious dog that has overstood his point.

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Except for Columbus who remains faithfully at his post in the lead, this is the first sign of life we have seen in five days.

In the forenoon the wind hauled from northeast to east, freshened and all day we have been running before a steady breeze with long comfortable seas making up astern.

The mizzen has jibed several times, uncertain as to which side to stay on, so we took it in, furled it, set the boom in the crotch, and found an improvement in her steering. Dead before the wind she steers better and goes just as fast under mainsail and jib. The forestaysail also was hanging from side to side so that was lowered and stowed.

The glass fell in the afternoon and then steadied.

Monday, October 1st —

Fresh easterly breeze and an overcast sky! The seas are making up astern and the gloomy-looking clouds are lowering until they seem, nearly, to touch the tops of our rigging.

Today, a problem arose of a puzzling nature. An old digestive ailment of mine returned in its

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full vindictive force, as though a dozen little fiends of hell were having a heavy-footed square dance within my innards. The question of what to do became an issue. These things come in sieges. An examination with a stomach doctor would end with a prescribed treatment of heat applications, a diet of milk and eggs, plenty of sleep and rest from any sort of work or worry. It had happened before and those were the unvarying answers. Madeira was nearly a week astern, home at least forty days dangling uncertainly at the end of the bowsprit.

The doctor was not at home, wouldn't be for some time, the milk and egg man had neglected to make his morning delivery and it was too late to order heat pads from the drug store. Furthermore, old *Stortebeker* with her many assets, was not equipped with the perquisites of a nursing home. Then, there was too much work to allow the navigator prolonged and unbroken sleep.

Off watch, lying in my berth, with an unholy row going on inside me, the question continued in body and in mind. Now, necessity is often the mother of invention, and again, the

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Biblical fellows say that a little child shall lead them. These adages become co-related quickly when little Stinker, growing larger each day, climbed up on the berth as if to condole with me, then becoming quite sympathetic, walked across my chest and curled up over the solar plexus. Without further ado she went to sleep.

The doctors always suggested a heat pad to draw the pain and the pad had come as if I had pressed a button in a sanitarium bed, only more quickly. The warm animal heat from this little bundle of fur eased the pain, and thereafter Stinker was used in the off watches as official hot-water bottle. From experience, I can recommend to seagoing-stomach-sufferers: Take a cat along—just in case!

Tuesday, October 2nd —

We had a bad night. It blew hard all through it, and at six in the morning the mainsail gibed hard, carrying away the weather backstay as it went over. The backstay went high in the air in a wide arc, swung back hard in a pendulum movement; and the block swinging wildly at the end of it, cut through the mainsail and sliced

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it at the luff for a good six feet. A knife could not have done a more efficient job. Fortunately, we were wearing our old and rotten mainsail to save our new one for the last half of the passage.

All hands turned out to take off the sail. Luckily, no other damage was done.

It was not time yet to put on our new mainsail and anyway, running dead before it, a squaresail was needed. There was no squaresail on board, nor square yard, but necessity again put a card in our hand to play. There was an awning below and awning poles on deck, so the awning was set, two poles lashed together as a yard at the head, and two at the foot since the awning had only a light boltrope and would not hold a sheet. It was set and we were under sail again — “square” sail this time, the yard braced at the top and sheeted home at the bottom.

She handled easily with it. Since time was of no consequence, we elected to jog along under the reduced rig, save our good canvas and give the running rigging a respite.

Steady fresh breeze all afternoon and night.

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The sky cleared in patches as the glass rose. From the look of the weather we had been on the fringes of a blow which had passed us with a comfortable margin.

Wednesday, October 3rd —

Several hard black squalls introduced the day. Three of them came between five and six. There was some rain in them but principally wind—malignant-looking squalls that pushed their way toward us from the northwest, diagonally across and against the prevailing wind. They came, black out of a dark sky, struck viciously three times as we ran off before them, and then passed, permitting the rising sun to clear the atmosphere. Then the wind steadied again and all was peace and quiet once more on the Western Ocean.

Spent the whole morning drying out clothes, blankets, mattresses, etc., and patching the torn mainsail. Quiet afternoon and night.

Thursday, October 4th —

Wind, east and steady. Typical trade wind weather and life aboard is pleasant, standing

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easy watches in the fair weather, reading, writing, playing cards and telling stories of the other life, ashore. Stinker, the successful stomach specialist, is growing amazingly into a real salty sea cat. A few flying fish came aboard last night, attracted by the lights. Prowling on the deck before daylight, Stinker found them and ate all but the wings and tail feathers. A husky cat, and lucky—she is the only member aboard who has had any fresh food in a week.

Friday, October 5th —

A clear sunrise and steady sailing all morning. At noon, we passed our first turning mark, 25° N. latitude, and $28^{\circ} 30'$ W. longitude, and headed the ship for home due west. If the trades blow true, we have made enough southing to carry on straight across. We have sailed the ship slowly, so far, easing her of any possible strain.

This is the tenth day out of Madeira in which the weather has been comfortable and pleasant. We have not pushed the ship as our plan remains to stay this side of 50° W. longitude until October 21st. The hurricane area lies west of 50° .

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Our ship is a bit ragged from the hard sailing she has had since the spring and as we are short-handed it seems wise to ease along rather than hurry.

From Madeira we have run down a little less than eight hundred miles in ten days, averaging about eighty miles for each daily run, a slow passage, but we have made it so deliberately.

Almost three thousand miles lie ahead of us yet, as far as from New York to England, and we are already ten days out. However, we are all becoming seasoned to the task. The routine of the ship is running precisely, and all hands are well, if a bit thin. But although we are low in weight we have hardened physically; our bodies have actually toughened since we left Gibraltar.

Temperamentally, the crew seem in splendid shape. Ned and Dick are calm and placid, absolutely unruffled by any untoward occurrence, including my shortness of temper, which came to light upon occasions, due, I think, to the responsibility which was mine. James Morrisson sings, whistles and dances

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through his tedious days in the galley, but always accomplishes his work efficiently. They all work hard and willingly, answer every call in a cheerful manner and, I hope, forgive my shortcomings as skipper. The captain of every vessel however large or small must of necessity live apart and alone. His is the final responsibility. Upon him rests the problem of answering all questions, making each decision for his ship and crew at sea, and finally rendering a steward's account to the owner on shore.

Years of sea tradition have put him in a singular position. He should be above personal feeling, away from prejudice so that the ship is all important, and her people various but essential parts of the whole mechanism. So, even on a small ship, where the responsibility is relatively as great, he must be a man apart, and live and think fairly, in a manner befitting the importance of his office.

The sun set in a cool sea, proving in a final burst of golden light, its potentiality. The western sky was so brilliant, it seemed incredible that it should ever give way to the dusk slowly

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creeping over the world. The stars appearing in their turn marked the passage of another day.

The night watches began and the course was west—three thousand miles to home.

XIV

THE NORTHEAST TRADES

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Saturday, October 6th —

Real trade wind weather at last! After months of dreaming, planning and talking of the trades, familiarly, we found them in earnest this day. They were not blowing, however, to the usual conception of the term nor to the pilot charts' prediction. Always the excuses for light weather had ended in — "when we get in the trades" — and voluble opinions had arisen as to how we would sail when we reached this mecca of the sailing ship.

For the practical purposes of making fast time they were disappointing. Our speed was not visibly increased, but perhaps the marine garden which had slowly but definitely attached itself to the ship's bottom explained this. Even a species of small clam had fastened in

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abundance to the underbody, which had not helped our speed at all.

The little pilot fish swims ahead of us still patiently gearing himself down to our laborious progress. All about, sunning themselves, are flying fish. They have come in great numbers and disport themselves with abandon across our path.

We are all breaking out in salt water sores from washing in it. Fresh water is too valuable for laving purposes. No one cares seriously for we are on our way home.

Saturday, October 7th —

Another Sunday, this time given principally to shaving and washing off, as best we can, the filth of nearly two weeks. No matter how particular you are on a small vessel, there is always an underlying coat of filth which seems to be more an outer skin than just plain dirt. Vindictively it sticks despite hard scrubbing that only has a superficial degree of success.

Easy sailing all day. Light trades blowing us home, comfortably if not swiftly.

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Monday, October 8th —

A superb purple sunrise brought to us another day of this sea passage. A light wind in the early morning freshened during the day, but moderated in the afternoon and evening to its usual strength. The sun set quietly in a varied sky which was slightly overcast.

Tuesday, October 9th —

Early in the day our improvised squaresail (awning) tore out to the boltropes in spite of our carefully rigged lower yard (awning poles). This was taken off to be repaired while *Stortebeker* ran on under the jib and mizzen. A quiet day with a heavily overcast sky.

Wednesday, October 10th —

Very heavy clouds all night, racing along on our course. The glass has fallen and what with that, it looks as though we are in for some sort of hard weather.

Thursday, October 11th —

It began to blow at two o'clock—before daylight—hard from the north. We had put the old

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mainsail on in place of the squaresail, and it was all hands on deck to take it off again. By day-break it was blowing close on to gale force and steady in direction. Hauling to east of north it strengthened so we trimmed sheets to hold our course west. At eight it was howling in its intensity, shrieking its spiteful way through our already well-worn rigging and threatening more damage.

Running under forestaysail and mizzen, *Stortebeker* boiled along while occasional big seas made up on her starboard quarter, curling over the rail sometimes covering the helmsman. It was wet sailing and far from warm, too, as the wind was bringing cold blasts down with it from the higher latitudes whence it came.

This was our hardest sailing since the westerly gale which had swept us beyond Gibraltar, and the look of the present blow was becoming strongly reminiscent of the other that we had not been able to forget.

Gales at sea in small boats are always uncomfortable, but when your ship has been sailed long and hard, the thought of an impending one is mingled with uncertainty for the vessel. Such

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hard experiences are always thrilling in recollection. Looking forward to them is another matter.

From a well-found boat it would not be such a bad prospect, from our poor overworked ship it seemed cruel to make it look another gale in the eyes. To all the crew (who were properly sea-worn) it was routine—gale or no; so we prepared. We snugged everything down, on deck and below, inspected all running parts and set up the lifelines.

Daylight faded out in the murk of a blackening sky and the steady-blowing northerly. All through the watches of the night, it snarled its way and the sea made up, breaking in spots. There was little sleeping done.

Friday, October 12th —

Our gale never materialized. From every plausible angle it looked a gale and then—in a kindly way it eased off, hauled around to the northeast where it had started and settled again into the trade wind.

Patches of blue in the sky brightened the picture. By dark every small vestige of the bad

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weather had blown off into nothing. Again we had our flying fish weather.

Someone remembered, while making a log entry, that this was Columbus Day, the day the great man made his landfall on San Salvador. We, who were making no part in world's history, yet were sailing approximately the same route, felt perhaps a companion feeling for the man. Knowing the distances, their equipment and the lack of knowledge of the sea they were sailing, it appeared to us who had all the aids and cognition, a tremendous feat.

That night brought a great thrill for us. It was eleven o'clock when those of us off watch heard the cry of the helmsman to come on deck. There were steamer lights several miles astern. It sounds like a trivial incentive to excitement, but we had been out for seventeen days and this was the first sign that there were any other men alive. It was only a small light in the distance, bright for ten minutes, before disappearing in the black. It reminded us of that eerie phrase—"Ships that pass in the night."

Though we could not even speak in passing, it gave us a warm feeling to know that we were not entirely alone.

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Saturday, October 13th—

A bright and clear day dawned with a light wind and little of interest to stir the mind or the imagination. The sun is getting far south and the days are shorter but always pleasant. To those of us who have done most of our sailing in the northern latitudes, it is strange to have such mild moderate weather in the middle of October.

Sunday, October 14th —

The wind dropped during the night so the last daily run was only thirty miles. Today at noon, we were 1175 miles from Barbadoes, the nearest land ahead. Jacksonville, our destination, remains elusively far away over 2300 sea miles.

Not a breath of air from ten o'clock in the morning on. All day the sea was like a mirror, the ocean as flat as it could possibly be. So we drifted westward, with the westerly set as our only motive power.

Monday, October 15th —

Calm all night. A light showed astern at 4

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A. M. and the breaking gray dawn showed a steamer headed directly toward us. In the middle of a bursting, golden dawn, she shifted her course, closing on our own, and came along-side as soon as it was clear daylight.

Flurries of conversation across fifty yards of water made her out as the Dutch tanker, *Melpomene* — in ballast, bound for one of the Gulf ports. She circled us and in reply to our queries in broken French, gave us in broken English our position, which was what we wanted most of all. It was $23^{\circ} 48'$ N. latitude and $39^{\circ} 08'$ W. longitude, and that was within two miles of the position that we had figured! This was a real thrill—to know definitely where we were after twenty days at sea.

The conversation was limited through our lack of a common language. We were particularly interested in learning the result of the American Cup Race off Newport, since we had bet money on it. But our friend, failing to understand, could not inform us on this point.

Twice she circled us, made sure that all was well on our ship, then resumed her course. Waving us good luck, she steamed away to the westward.

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Hard rain squalls all morning and into the late afternoon. There was little wind in them but the rain was fresh and pleasant, washing our salt-caked bodies. All hands had a glorious time lying down and splashing in the water that rolled from side to side on the deck.

The squalls lasted through the afternoon and then into the night, making the man on watch miserable with the continued soaking.

Tuesday, October 16th —

Rain squalls all day. Though they were a pleasure yesterday, they began to be over-abundant and something of a nuisance. This is the third week out from Madeira. Twenty-one days of varied weather with light fair weather predominating.

Wednesday, October 17th —

The wind is practically dead, and the sea as calm as a mountain lake on a still day. It looks as if this will be a record-breaking passage on the wrong side of the ledger. Twenty-three miles was the last twenty-four hours run. An air of listlessness pervades what activity there

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is on board. Watches are set and kept, sights taken, food eaten, and the crew are busying themselves with doing idle things, anything at all to keep the mind occupied and the hands busy.

Calm weather is a fine time for overhauling the gear, making baggywrinkle, painting woodwork, oiling blocks and doing all the little necessary jobs of keeping the vessel in smooth running order. Also, it is the time for drying the dampness out of clothes, mattresses and blankets. These were all brought out and aired, making it clean-smelling below, afterward.

Thursday, October 18th —

The trades have died definitely, leaving not the smallest vestige of their freshness behind. As in Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," we are a painted ship upon a painted ocean although the sea is more carefully painted than are we. Someone thought of that line and coyly suggested that we improve our looks to match the beauty of the sea picture about us. The dory was launched over the side and on the slightly swelling water, we took brushes and buckets

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of white paint and scraped till we were tired and then painted the rust-streaked sides.

Rowing off on the flat sea and turning, *Stor-tebeker* presented to us an unusual picture. Having lived aboard for many months, none of us had ever seen her under sail. Dipping slowly into the slowly heaving sea, she looked small to be alone out there. We rowed in a large circle around her, regarding her curiously from each angle. Only James Morrisson was left aboard on watch.

A picture of a small ship, set in a large glassy sea, vaguely framed with the horizon's rim and the sky. True, she was not impressive, she was too small for that, but she held in her safe-keeping, our lives and hopes for the future.

This was no inspiring picture of a ship at sea, only a small ketch, sails hanging aimlessly, with no way on, drifting to no purpose whatsoever, but it was our ship, our home, and returning, all felt that we had been away from her for a long time. It was a comforting emotion to be on board again.

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Friday, October 19th —

The same conditions prevailed as during the previous day, though in the early afternoon we picked up a light easterly, the first breeze of any importance in several days. Heading a bit south to get a fresher trade wind, it improves; below the Tropic of Cancer it is much better.

Rain squalls throughout the afternoon cooled the dead atmosphere of the windless days.

Schools of porpoises—huge active fellows, jumping clear—raced toward us at dark, then sheered away and left us alone with a nearly full moon above. The ghostly clouds began to move before a freshening wind.

The wind has gone southeast, making for superb sailing and each night watch is a memorable picture of perfect sailing weather.

Saturday, October 20th —

At dawn, an excited cry from Dick at the wheel roused us from an untroubled sleep. Cheerily he called, so we knew there was no danger, but rather something of interest.

Coming on deck, wiping our eyes of sleep, a rare sight greeted us. Since we were all of an

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unscientific trend perhaps the thing we saw was wasted, but in our way we appreciated the phenomenon.

There were two whales, a hundred yards off the starboard quarter, obviously making love in the cool of the dawn, and so enraptured with their amorous intentions, caring little that we were there to see them.

So much has been written of the tender passion portrayed in the arts, written in music, and played in the drama, but never was there such a colossal surge of emotion as this—the largest of all creatures, mating, before the sunrise, in the middle of the Western Ocean.

They played and sported about the ship through the morning, evidently amused by us, diving under us athwartships, then coming up to blow quite close. Again they would race with us, and once one of them scraped our side. Often they would try to leap clear of the water but their bulk was too great. They always ended in a curving dive and then would disappear with their flukes twisting. Cumbersome creatures, but graceful in their way, they played the day through.

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Going to the main crosstrees we watched them. They resembled submarines, manoeuvring, leaving a curving wake in their course. They always came as close as they could without touching us, twisting, turning, with their white bellies up, flashing in the sunlight over the surface of the blue sea.

Killers they were, I think, probably thirty feet in length. They spent the day with us, disporting themselves, until we were weary of watching them.

Our little pilot fish at the bow had fled in panic early in the day to return only when the large fellows disappeared. Into the night the whales stayed, coming to the surface, blowing, diving and then—in a final, mad thrashing of white water in the moonlight—they were gone.

Sunday, October 21st —

A very quiet day. Improved sailing weather has brought back to us the first joy of trade wind sailing. The southeast wind is light but steady.

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Monday, October 22nd —

Making better way than we have in a week or more, although the average is only about three and a half knots. A deluge of successive rain squalls wet us through—vicious ones with wind in them. Once *Stortebeker* was knocked down very hard and it was good sailing, rail under, decks awash—the real kind of offshore work. The days and nights are so beautiful that they defy any satisfactory description, and who would have the words to color the picture? It is another world, vague, yet apparently ordered into definitely fixed phases of movement. The wind and the sea change, but under the guidance of natural laws which in the main are unvarying. Living dependent on the weather, under its spell and owing allegiance to its influences, it is impossible not to note its steady, reliant ways, or its omens of temporary change.

The vast stores of knowledge that have been distributed to the seaman, in pilot books and charts, and the benefit of his own experience, give to him the key to his natural world. All these combined endow him with sea wisdom.

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Even in our short experiences, we were developing an understanding of these things in our own need for our part in the elemental sea life.

Monday, October 22nd —

We were halfway across the Atlantic today, at one in the afternoon, when we crossed the longitude of 50° W. Remaining are still nearly 2000 miles to go, but it looks easy to us now—inured as we are to the life. It is infinitely better than the 6000 long sea miles that lay ahead when we were in Athens.

After twenty-eight days at sea, there is yet ahead a long trick for each man. There is a strange dearth of impatience on board, for everyone feels secure in his part, as if his whole life had been prepared for this work.

The hard routine has made us all immune to small discomforts. A certain philosophic fatalism seems to have developed in each one; the work has given physical strength; the general life, a mental balance with which to ward off what might have been a growing tedium.

It was, therefore, not strange that we should

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realize what was taking place within us. The sea, as though rewarding us for our success thus far, was developing in us its own great mastery of feeling.

XV

LANDFALL

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LANDFALL

Two weeks had passed into the white wake astern. Plodding westward, the slow march of ponderous sailing before light airs had brought the ship to a position about nine hundred miles from home. Three hundred miles to the southward lay Mona Passage, between Haiti and Porto Rico. Less than that and to the southwest was the nearest land—Turk's Island.

We had encountered no hurricanes or hard weather of any sort. Only minor calamities had occurred, such as the old gear giving way, and the rotten canvas tearing, almost under its own weight.

Nearing the islands, steamers were sighted occasionally. Sometimes they would be quite close, but more frequently only smudges of

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smoke on the horizon or a bit of super-structure rising above the sea's edge in the distance.

Fair weather had remained consistently with us making the life aboard as pleasant as possible. The conditions were really close to being perfect—the only drawback being the lack of a good fresh breeze for any considerable length of time. Naturally, we were temporarily weary of it all. The complete isolation and apprehension upon nearing the coast had begun to play a tune on our nerves.

Watch upon watch! There was no change in the routine or the behavior of the ship. The same duties, the same food, the same periods of rest off watch — everything was the same. To make it worse, two days of maddening calm settled around us during which there was not enough draft to blow out a match. And that is a trying time upon a man's nerves.

Six weeks from the departure in Madeira, forty-two days of almost continuous light weather, nearly three thousand miles run down with practically one thousand remaining—and then this calm had come! The calm that takes the smile from the lips and leaves the seaman

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heavy-hearted and unoccupied. They are harder to endure, in a sense, than the gales, for then there is work to be done.

But a change was brewing. It came—slowly at first with a gradual overcasting of the fair sky. Then they hit us—grim rain squalls from the northeast. These were not the slow languorous squalls of pattering warm rain that we had felt further out in the past weeks, but hard driving ones, touched with the winter of the Northern latitudes. And at night we understood that kind though the weather had been so far, these winds were coming from further north where the cold gales blew. They felt cold to the touch. Heavier clothes were necessary on watches, which at night were no longer romantic scenes of balmy, flying fish weather, but coldly cutting hours of discomfort to our thin blood, used only to six months of tropic warmth.

From the north and northeast they came, blowing hard and relentlessly. The sky was obliterated. No longer was it marching banks of fleecy clouds but a dead black ceiling of darkness without a break in it.

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It blew for a solid week and the vessel's speed was increased. Reefs were taken in the main-sail, mizzen and a storm jib was set. No longer were the decks dry. Day and night it blew, the seas lengthened, sometimes breaking aboard, and always there was running water on the decks. Now and then it would come below through an open hatch or port and then it would be wet all over below. The dampness went through the ship. All berths, mattresses, blankets and clothes were permeated with a clammy discomfort.

It was good sailing though the work was harder. All hands were grateful for being aboard a real little ship which could stand up to it instead of a smart, cranky yacht which would be buried under the weight of the hard sailing.

The visibility was poor and coming close to the coast a sharper lookout was kept for other vessels.

Straining and groaning the ship moved, hard-pressed, leaving astern a turbulent white wake that spread and streaked a gray sea.

The waste of water encompassed the ship. Large seas came along, thrusting at the quarter,

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lifting *Stortebeker* sharply with a pitching forward and sideways motion, utterly discomfoting. Existence below held only a minimum of satisfaction. Every moveable object was lashed secure. The forecstle was continually wet and cooking was hardly accomplished. (James Morrisson moved aft to share what comfort the cabin could offer).

Day and night for a week, the hard weather held and then on November thirteenth, it backed to the north and then west of north. Now, Jacksonville, our destination, was on latitude 31° N. We had come up to 25° and $73^{\circ} 30'$ W. and so the port was almost due northwest over 500 miles. The wind held north by west and we headed as far to the north as we could.

We had to clear the northern islands of the Bahama group to stand up to the northern Florida coast, so the ship was sheeted down and jammed into it. The wind was too hard and the seas threw her off, making it hopeless. The only thing that remained was to run through the Providence Channel of the Bahama Bank, so that course was chosen.

All the night of the thirteenth it blew un-

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yieldingly, continuing for the next twenty-four hours, and we sailed with the sheets hard aboard.

The morning of November fifteenth broke cold and forbidding. A high beam sea made the vessel roll until solid water came over the bulwarks, rolled about the decks and found its way all too easily into the wet quarters below.

By observation at noon of the day before, we were one hundred and fifty miles west of Great Abaco Island, where we hoped to make our landfall. The sun sights of the last few days had been hard to get due to the overcast sky, so our exact position was open to very strong doubt.

Through the morning the sun was elusive, shining vaguely and no sights were possible. At noon we stood by, hoping and praying for a break in the sky to enable us to get a latitude sight. Five minutes to go and the sky was brightening faintly. But noon came and went without the sight being taken. Into the afternoon we stood by, waiting patiently for a quick glimpse of the sun, but late in the day all hope for an observation left.

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At four o'clock our dead reckoning position from yesterday's fix put us ten miles from the coast. It was getting dark rapidly and we had not had an accurate check since we spoke the *Melpomene* one month ago to the day. The last day's run was estimated entirely, and there we were—reefs ahead, darkness closing down and the ship's position uncertain. Ironically, the wind was driving us on at a good six knots.

It was not a cheerful situation. The entire success of six months' work was dangling precariously on a dangerous coast. Great Abaco Island was lurking ahead. A half year's happy dreams of making a perfectly clear landfall were shattered by the complete indifference of the weather to our purpose.

We hove to at dark on the starboard tack under main and backed forestaysail. Every man was on deck, a self-appointed lookout. The night wore on and no one went below. It still blew from the north and the vessel rolled until the freeing ports were overworked, loosing the rushing water from the decks.

No light, no mark of the land showed through the heavy darkness—only the sea and

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the wind were apparent, playing a tune of mockery in our ears. Lying to, the ship drifted.

Frequently, a lookout was sent aloft to the crosstrees, coming down to the deck without a word. No one asked, since all knew from his silence that he had seen nothing. Each man took his turn aloft—dangerous work in the darkness as a missed footing meant a fall to the deck or into the sea if he were lucky. It was a tense game; all of our nerves were drawn to the breaking point. There was a prize put up—five dollars to the first man to sight the land, and better than that, relief for us all.

For a half hour each we stayed aloft, as that was all a man could stand in the pitching seas. Standing by below, the wheel free, the vessel doing her own work, there was nothing to do but wait. Midnight came, and one o'clock, and the watching went on. Two o'clock passed by and still no word from aloft. We were tired, and even the administration of James Morrison's coffee was losing its power to keep us awake.

The night dragged on terribly. Exhausted we waited. Then, there was a stentorian cry

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of "Light." It came from Dick at the crosstrees when we had nearly given it up as hopeless. Ned ran to look at the clock and found the time was two-fifty. Dick reported a flashing Light bearing due southwest, came down, and I went aloft to verify it. There it was, faintly flashing but definite! We identified it in the Light List as the Hole in the Wall Light on the Southern end of Great Abaco Island—about nine miles distant.

Our estimated position was correct. We had drifted with a southerly coastal current. And so our landfall was made on the fifty-second day out of Madeira!

The forestaysail was eased off and under the same reduced sail we jogged in closer. The light brightened gradually. It bore northwest at six. An hour later, in plain daylight, the land appeared for the first time, low and flat. Eleuthera Island on the port beam was out of sight but Great Abaco Island showed up sharply. We rounded the Hole in the Wall at eight under full sail and entering the Providence Channel, made the course for Stirrup Cay, forty miles away to westward.

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Green the land showed on the starboard beam, balm for our weary minds and bodies. Magic islands rose up and were watched hungrily by all of us. Land looks very dear after a long passage. But another thought came to us with a sharp pang. Though the land meant success, the happy ending of a long watch, it also finished our work, our companionship with the ship and with the sea. We looked astern and half regretfully saw the open ocean fade from our sight.

Once in the channel the seas came short and steep. The wind had hauled again to northeast, holding freshly. We were out of sight of land through the day, but it was all around us in the form of dangerous reefs and cays. The warm smell of it had taken the place of the unadulterated fresh breath of the sea.

Nassau lay to the leeward and the tempting thought of slacking the sheets and running down there pulled hard. But ours was a fair wind and we put aside a delightful welcome and a premature end to our passage. We had perfect sailing weather at last. Every rag was set and *Stortebeker* was taking the white bit in

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her teeth and pulling hard at the reins which held her sails. She seemed to laugh as she went, pulling, tugging, flirting on the crests, dipping with abandon into the troughs of water. She seemed to know it was a last fling.

Stirrup Cay came abeam in the late afternoon. Laying the course northwest by west through the northwest Providence Channel, we stood on at five and a half knots. The sun came out clearly for the first time in a week, brightening the sea and the sky with tropic warmth.

With the wind from the northeast, Jacksonville was out of the picture as a landing place. Looking over the chart of the Florida coast, we found it lacking in proper harbors. Unfortunately we had no detailed charts of the coast, only a large one of the whole West Indies. From this chart we decided the best available harbor close by was at Jupiter Inlet, opposite and a little to the north of Grand Bahama Bank, which was to the north of us. We chose to go in there, although the entrance was unknown to us.

Night came on, with a fresh fair wind, clear

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sky and a brilliant three-quarters moon. It was beautiful sailing. To the north was the Grand Bahama Bank, south, miles of reefs and cays, so we kept our course in the middle of the channel. Through the night these conditions held. Careful lookout was kept for lights on either side but none were sighted.

The morning came behind a most lovely sunrise astern of glorious golden-red. The day brightened quickly, and the strong wind drove all the wandering clouds from the sky.

From Stirrup Cay to Jupiter was one hundred and thirty-five miles. Fine sights during the morning and an excellent observation at noon gave us an accurate position—placing us one hundred and fifteen miles from Stirrup Cay, twenty miles off the coast and in the heart of the Gulf Stream.

All hands were busied, as they had been all of the day before, cleaning the ship and themselves, polishing, brightening, wherever it was possible. A little to the south of the latitude of Jupiter, the course was held due west to offset the northerly drift of the Gulf Stream. Just a few more hours and the passage would be done.

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The colors were hoisted to the peak, the quarantine flag to the starboard rigging and our ship was ready to enter port.

Two o'clock came, two-thirty, and at three I went aloft and scanned the sea ahead. No sign showed as yet. But at three-ten, something appeared out of the sea—a tall tower, and I gave the cry of "Land-ho." It was Jupiter Light, dead ahead on our course, ten miles away.

Two short hours brought us up on the coast until trees, buildings and then the land showed clearly. As we came close to the shore in the cool of the soft evening, the wind dropped away as if it had served its purpose, knowing that we would need it no more.

The evening of a fine day! Yet it was a day of mixed emotions. There was happiness in seeing our land again and sadness since this was the evening of our long passage. The day waned quietly as at six o'clock we sailed between the surf of the narrow entrance, between the sand bars on either side, up into the inlet where we dropped anchor—fifty-three days out of Madeira, six months from Greece.

Sails furled, surrounded by the land, grip-

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ping the earth again with her anchor, *Stortebeker* rested. People came aboard, kindly bringing us fresh food, tobacco, things to read and news of the world. Officials came and entered the ship formally; doctors, port authorities and immigration officials swarmed around us.

The quarantine flag was hauled down, and at sunset the colors came fluttering to the deck, the national flag and my own private signal. The riding light was set for the night.

Home from the sea—the ship and her men! All around was the warm land, palm trees, houses, the strangely sounding voices of people, children playing and the cries of birds in the trees.

In the quiet waters of the inlet, the ship lay to her anchor, at peace. The stars came out timidly, gathering in numbers, and the great moon rose. The wind had died and only occasional lappings of the water at the vessel's side, reminded us that we were still afloat.

Then the night, and a soft wind came, making music in the branches of the palms. Far off we could hear the moaning of the surf on the

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bar outside, the sea beating steadily against the edges of the earth.

As men returned from the sea, it was a sad tune in our ears and it sounded as a requiem for the cruise that was finished. The long trick was over, and as tired as men may be tired, we slept in peace. We were off watch.

THE END

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